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MARCUS AURELIUS

BOOKS BY
HENRY DWIGHT SEDGWICK

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ITALY IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY
A SHORT HISTORY OF ITALY
AN APOLOGY FOR OLD MAIDS AND OTHER ESSAYS
ESSAYS ON GREAT WRITERS
LIFE OF FRANCIS PARKMAN
DANTE, ETC.

MARCUS AURELIUS

A BIOGRAPHY TOLD AS MUCH AS MAY BE BY LETTERS, TOGETHER WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF THE STOIC RELIGION AND AN EXPOSITION OF THE ROMAN GOVERNMENT'S ATTEMPT TO SUPPRESS CHRISTIANITY DURING MARCUS'S REIGN

BY
HENRY DWIGHT SEDGWICK

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AMS PRESS
NEW YORK

Reprinted from the edition of 1921, New Haven
First AMS EDITION published 1971
Manufactured in the United States of America

International Standard Book Number: 0-404-05691-1

Library of Congress Number: 77-137290

AMS PRESS INC.
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10003

IN MEMORIAM

Some there be that by due steps aspire
To lay their just hands on that Golden Key
That opes the Palace of Eternity:
To such my errand is.

COMUS.

PREFACE

IN this little book my purpose is to provide those people for whom the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius contain a deep religious meaning, with such introductory information about him, his character, his religion, and his life, as I think, judging from my own experience, they may desire. So I begin with an exposition of Stoic philosophy, and, as I believe that philosophy to have been primarily a religion, I present it as such. And in my defence to sundry criticisms made upon Marcus by ancient and modern writers, I give by far the most space to the gravest, that he persecuted the Christians, for I think no accusation would have surprised him more, or have seemed to him more unreasonable.

I have not wished to encumber the pages with notes, and therefore I have relegated to the appendix most references to my authority for statements in the text. Such quotations in a foreign language as have not been translated in the text will be found translated in the appendix. Greek phrases that occur in the letters I have rendered in French.

Cambridge, Massachusetts, H. D. S.
October, 1920.

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INTRODUCTION

GOETHE'S saying, "Das Schaudern ist der Menschheit bestes Teil," does not need the recommendation of his name; it carries its own authority. Among the qualities that go to make up character, a sensitiveness to the feeling of awe is the surest sign of the higher life. It lies deeper than other susceptibilities, sensuous or spiritual. Love, fame, or truth, have greater power to dazzle and overcome, but awe bestows the more abiding satisfaction; it sets a man apart from the many, it lifts him into communion with what for him is the highest, and ennobles his condition. This sense of awe is the fruit of the religious life, whether that life be lived in the solitude of the monastery, library, or wood, in the company of people consecrated to an ideal, or in the hurly-burly of the world. But the leaven of religion is not always at work, even in men of religious life. The spirit bloweth where and when it listeth. Sometimes the causes that lead men to religion are close at hand, bereavement, disappointment, sin; sometimes public calamities turn whole communities to the great fundamental question of life, Is there a God? and, sometimes, a religious genius comes with healing on his lips and rouses men, both singly and in multitudes, to perceive the beauty of a universe in which there is a God, and the desolation of a universe in which there is none. But religion does not lie at beck and call;

> We cannot kindle when we will,
> The fire which in the heart resides.

There are times when the temple of the soul is empty. We may acknowledge, with our intelligence, the supreme noble-

ness of that overpowering sense of reverence which turns a man in upon his heart and fills him with a consciousness of a presence, interpret that consciousness or that presence as we will; and yet we cannot conjure it to come. Awe lies beyond the reach of the human will. It is in these empty times, these barren moods, that there is need of some doctrine, some rule of action, that shall serve as makeshift to occupy the empty place which the sense of awe should occupy. Such a makeshift is the Stoic philosophy.

Under the long dominion of Christian dogma, chosen souls have experienced, in a sharper or duller degree, *das Schaudern,* the shudder of awe from the consciousness of what they believed to be a manifestation of the divine presence. But the Christian faith has lost its ancient authority, and though there are many cries, Lo here! Lo there! as yet no new religion has come to preach the gospel of what is to be. And it is not impossible, nor yet unlikely, that the principles underneath Stoic philosophy may still be of service today, to teach the pilgrim soul to find that support within himself which he does not find without.

The ancient Stoics were in the same ignorance as seekers today who are no longer Christians. They had no authoritative revelation, no word of God, to teach them the nature of the world in which they found themselves, no divine code of laws to tell them what to do. They looked about and beheld sorrow, disease, old age, maladjustments of all sorts, wars between states, civil strife, contention among neighbors, earthquakes, and tempests. Such was the world then; it is not very different now. In a world of this sort, what shall a man do to persuade himself that it is a world of order and not of chaos, that there is something in it other than vanity, that it has what the human heart, if the human heart had spiritual eyes, would pronounce to be a meaning? The Stoics were honest men and would not go beyond the evidence of the senses, they turned away from Plato's dream

that the soul released from the body may behold divine beauty, and from Socrates' hope of communion with the heroic dead, and created what they called a philosophy, but what we may more properly call a religion, out of the world as their human senses saw it, a religion, austere and cold, but sane, high, and heroic. I do not pretend that we can go all the way with them, for their physics were childish, and their metaphysics not very much better, but I do think we can go far enough to derive help and consolation, however meagre and barren both help and consolation shall appear matched with those offered by Christianity.

The Stoics were monists. They believed that all the universe is of one substance, and constitutes a unity, that men are integral parts of the mighty whole, and in their lives help to accomplish the will of the whole; and from these postulates, they derived an abiding sense of the seriousness and dignity of human life. They deduced, as a fundamental dogma, that a man wears, as it were, the uniform of the universe, and must quit himself with wisdom, fortitude, sobriety, and justice. And, today, many a man, though perhaps not everyone, if he will consider the starry heavens and the earth with its vast diversity of things, some instinct with life, some endowed with mind, may bring himself to feel that the universe is entitled to the adjective *divine*, however much that term may evade his attempts at definition, and that he himself is a comrade of all that exists, of the infinitely great and the infinitely little, and that he is bound, by virtue of that comradeship, to fulfill the bond of allegiance which the acceptance of life implies, that the bond is sacred, like the *sacramentum* of the Roman soldier, and that he, merely because he is a man, must see to it that his life is consecrated.

Of all Stoics Marcus Aurelius is the purest and most sympathetic; indeed he is one of the most gracious figures out of all history. In the bewilderment of untoward cir-

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cumstance he strove for a theory of the universe that should command his reverence and excite his awe, and for a practice that should make him the obedient servant of a divine will. Like us, he was hedged about with doubts. Like us, he confronted the alternative of a universe which, moved by reason, proceeds toward a rational goal, or of an irrational universe, propelled by its own blind properties upon a purposeless course. As he says: "Either there is a compounding, a confusion, and a dispersion, or, there is unity, and order, and providence. If the former, why care to live on in such a meaningless turmoil and muddle? Why concern myself with anything except that sometime I shall 'become earth'? Why vex myself? For whatever I do, the 'dispersion' will come upon me. But if the latter alternative is true, I stand reverent, and steadfast, and I trust in my ruler." (M. A. VI, 10.) From this similarity in situation comes his power to help us on our way.

There are times in every man's life in which a longing possesses him to come into right relations with the universe, to bring his spirit into accord with its laws, his individual will into unison with the universal will. When sorrow comes, or the evening of life approaches, the great problems of humanity knock at the door. It is because Marcus Aurelius was haunted by these questionings and found the solution, at least for himself, to lie in innocence of thought, in kindness to his neighbor, in the performance of his duty to the State, that he is still a companion and guide to many men. Ernest Renan, who, however much the fruits of his scholarship may have withered and died, is still among the first of scholars in his sympathy with human needs, and in his knowledge of the human heart, truly said:

"Le livre de Marc-Aurèle, n'ayant aucune base dogmatique, conservera éternellement sa fraîcheur. Tous, depuis l'athée ou celui qui se croit tel, jusqu' à l'homme le plus engagé dans les croyances particulières de chaque culte, peuvent y

trouver des fruits d'édification. C'est le livre le plus purement humain qu'il y ait . . . ce livre incomparable, . . . ce manuel de la vie résignée, cet Évangile de ceux qui ne croient pas au surnaturel. . . . La science pourrait détruire Dieu et l'âme, que le livre des *Pensées* resterait jeune encore de vie et de vérité. La religion de Marc-Aurèle, . . . est la religion absolue, celle qui résulte du simple fait d'une haute conscience morale, placée en face de l'univers. Elle n'est ni d'une race ni d'un pays. Aucune révolution, aucun progrès, aucune découverte ne pourront la changer."

And Renan says no more than what many men have felt, each in his several way, from the ancient unknown annotator of the Vatican manuscript, who expressed his gratitude in verse, down to Frederick the Great, who says, "Marc-Aurèle peut-être, de tous les humains, a poussé la vertu au degré le plus éminent," and when false friends betrayed him betook himself for strength and comfort to the *Meditations;* down to Montesquieu who wrote: "Jamais philosophe n'a mieux fait sentir aux hommes les douceurs de la vertu et la dignité de leur être que Marc-Aurèle: le cœur est touché, l'âme aggrandie, l'esprit élevé"; down to General Gordon, Matthew Arnold, Frederic W. H. Myers, and many another of less name. And because so many people of so many sorts have set great store by this Roman "gospel," and because meditations about conduct gain in interest from a knowledge that the writer has lived in full accord with his own ideals, I have thought that, in spite of the number of books already written that concern Marcus Aurelius, there might be room for still another. I have tried to show him, as well as the materials would permit, not as he appears on the cold heights of his religious philosophy, but as he was seen by his contemporaries, in youth, manhood, and in later years. And I have tried to present Stoic philosophy, not as modern philosophers interpret it, but as Marcus viewed it and accepted it. And I have also felt it right to justify him in

enforcing the law of the land against the Christians. We look back with our knowledge of what Christianity is at its best, and with our knowledge that it was destined to prevail, and assume too readily that the pagan opposition was wrong. Perhaps reason, as well as faith, may justify its partisans. Marcus Aurelius did the right "as God gave him to see the right"; and in so doing, added a chapter to the history of tragedy and of life's irony.

H. D. S.

CHAPTER I

THE FOUNDERS OF STOICISM

TOWARD the end of the fourth century before Christ, Zeno the son of Mnaseas, a Cypriote merchant, arrived in Athens, took up his residence there and devoted himself to the study of philosophy. Three generations had come and gone since Socrates, "bringing philosophy down from the skies, had introduced it into cities and homes, and obliged men to examine life, and the nature of good and evil," and the events of the intervening years had turned men more and more to the acceptance of his teachings. When Zeno visited the schools he found philosophers disputing about the right way to live, quite as much as about physics or metaphysics. He studied various matters, but his disposition turned him to ethics, for though he had been bred upon Greek culture (as soon as he landed he picked up Xenophon's *Memorabilia* from a bookstall) he was Semitic, not only by the cast of his mind but also by blood; at least there seems little doubt that his people were Phoenicians who had settled in Citium, a town on the island of Cyprus closely connected by commercial ties with Tyre and Sidon. And this Hebraic disposition furnishes the framework on which his whole philosophy is built. Zeno belongs to the type of Semitic prophet. He was a man of swarthy complexion and gloomy aspect, tall and lean, most simple in his dress and abstemious in his diet. By preference he ate food that needed no cooking, and he often lived on bread and honey with a little sweet-smelling wine.

Of all the schools he found himself most at home with the Cynics, who might very well have been disciples of Micah

or Habakkuk. They were dogmatic men, careless of customary civility even to the point of insolence, but aflame with a passionate ardor to make men good according to their conception of goodness. Skeptics and men of the world poured ridicule upon their way of living, and have handed down jocose anecdotes about them; but these critics were blinded by prejudice. Epictetus looked with sympathetic eyes and has drawn quite a different picture. His account enables us to understand why Zeno, with his Hebraic temperament, turned to them rather than to other sects for practical wisdom in the conduct of life. The Cynic, Epictetus says, is like a father, for all men are his sons and all women his daughters; he must let his light shine before men and show them that, without any of the things they set store by, a man may be virtuous, and that simplicity and frugality are good for the body as well as the soul. His conscience must be pure, and his life also. He must watch and labor for mankind. His thoughts must be such as are worthy of a friend of the gods, of a servant of Zeus, of one who shares in the divine power. He must always be ready to say, "O Zeus, lead thou me on." He must not blame God or man; he must be free from anger, envy, or resentment; he must rid himself of all desire. Other men may wish to conceal what they do, and therefore live in a house, shut the door, and set a porter to guard it; but the house of the Cynic is built of modesty, modesty is his door, and modesty the porter that guards it. (Discourses, III, 22.)

These doctrines accorded with Zeno's racial inheritance, and he incorporated them into his creed. He took also another famous tenet of theirs. They asserted that men are not citizens of the town where they happen to be born, but citizens of the world, and owe allegiance to the whole world. The Cynics learned this from Socrates; in his time, however, the notion was a mere academic theory, but after Alexander the Great had swept away the independence of cities

and states and had gathered a great portion of the earth into one vast empire, it acquired a new and practical significance; and, by the time of Marcus Aurelius, when all the western world was under Roman sway, it had become a commonplace among educated Romans. And naturally the theory was easy of acceptance for a Phoenician, bred in Cyprus and living in Athens.

Had Zeno lived in Judaea he would have been a prophet of Jehovah, but his lot happened to be cast in a Greek trading city, the meeting-place of many diverse ideas, and of these he absorbed the materialistic theories of the early Ionian philosophers; he did not conceive of a divine personality, nor become a monotheist further than to accept the unity of the universe, nor rise to a spiritual conception of reality other than to grant an extreme tenuousness to the universal substance. If he considered these ideas he rejected them, and took such as suited him, wherever he found them, from Heraclitus, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, or Diogenes, and, fusing them together by the heat of his passionate temperament, created a new philosophy. Perhaps he gave freer rein to his temperament and laid greater emphasis on self-denial, in order to make the contrast more vivid between his puritan band in the Painted Porch, where the very walls enriched by pictorial art preached heroism, and that pleasant garden outside the city gates where, among fruits ripe in their seasons, Epicurus mocked the belief in a rational universe and taught his disciples the way to a life free from care. As to Zeno's doctrines, I will let his sentences, which are sometimes charged with passion like phrases from Isaiah, sometimes pregnant with homely wit after the manner of the Book of Proverbs, speak for themselves.

Ye shall not make any graven images,
Neither shall ye build temples to the Gods,
For nothing builded is worthy of the Gods;

The handiwork of artisans and carpenters
Is of little worth, neither is it sacred.

Ye shall not beautify the city,
Save with the righteousness of them that live therein.
Neither shall ye have courts of law.
Love is the god of amity and freedom,
Love is divine, he helpeth to keep the city safe,
He it is that prepareth concord.

Ye shall not live divided into cities and into townships,
Nor be kept asunder by contrary laws;
But ye shall hold all men as fellow citizens and fellow townsmen.
Ye shall have one law and one custom,
Like a flock, herded under one crook, that feedeth together.

The nature of the universe is twofold,
There is that which worketh and that which is wrought upon.
And that which is wrought upon
Is substance that hath neither shape nor form;
And that which worketh upon it
Is the word, and the word is God.

And God is everlasting
And permeateth all substance,
And thereby createth each several thing;
And from this substance proceed all created things.
And the universal whole is substance,
And that into which substance is divided is matter,
And the universal whole becometh neither greater nor less,
But each several thing becometh greater or less;
For the several parts do not remain the same always,
But they part asunder, and again they come together.

God is body, most pure,
And the beginning of all things,
And his providence pervadeth all that is.
God is ether, God is air,
God is spirit of ethereal fire;
He is diffused throughout creation
As honey through the honeycomb;
God goeth to and fro throughout all that is,
God is mind, God is soul, God is nature:
It is God that holdeth the universe together.

The artificer and disposer of the universe
Is the word, and the word is reason;
He is fate.
He is the determining cause of all things,
He is Zeus.

In all things is the divine;
The law of nature is divine.
The world and the heavens are the substance of God,
And the divine power worketh in the stars,
And in the years, in the months and in the seasons.

Zeus, Hera and Vesta,
And all the gods and goddesses
Are not Gods, but names
Given to things that lack life and speech;
For Zeus is the sky, Hera the air,
Poseidon the sea, and Hephaestus fire.

Lo, the fountain of life is character.
And from it, in their order, flow forth our actions.

Behold, happiness is the smooth flow of life.

The fulfillment of a man's life
Is to live in accord with nature;
So to live is to live in righteousness,
For nature leadeth to righteousness,
And the end of life is to live in accord with virtue.
Follow the Gods.

Man is born solely for righteousness,
For righteousness draweth to itself the souls of men
With no lure, no offerings from without,
But of its own splendor.
Virtue of itself is sufficient for happiness;
Righteousness is the sole and only good,
And nothing is evil save that which is vile and base.

Of things that are, some there are
Which are good and some which are evil,
And some which are neither good nor evil.
And the good are these:
Wisdom, Sobriety, Justice and Fortitude.
And the evil are these:

Folly, Intemperance, Injustice and Cowardice.
And things that are neither good nor evil are indifferent.
And things indifferent are these:
Life and death, good repute and ill repute,
Pain and pleasure, riches and poverty,
Sickness and health, and such like.

And of men there are two sorts,
The upright man and the wicked man;
And the upright man all his life
Will do the things that are right,
But the ways of the wicked are evil.

The wise man is blessed, the wise man is rich;
Only the wise, however needy they be, are rich;
Only the wise, however ill-favored, are beautiful;
For the lineaments of the soul
Are more beautiful than those of the body.

All good men are friends one to another.

And, as I have said, the wisdom of some of his maxims has the homely tang of the Book of Proverbs.

The wise man will do all things well,
He will season his porridge wisely.

Give not thine ear unto that which is pleasant;
And take from the flatterer his freedom of speech.

Though ye are able to get sweets from your labors,
Yet ye take them from cookshops.

His sayings in conversation had the same individuality and vigor: "Better to trip with the feet than the tongue." "There is nothing we need so much as time." And he often quoted the remark of a music teacher to a young flute-player who was blowing a great blast on his flute, "Greatness does not make a thing excellent, but excellence makes a thing great." And when some spendthrifts were excusing themselves, saying that they spent out of a large property, he answered, "So you agree with the cook who put too much salt in his dish, and said he had a great quantity left." He

defined, in accord with Aristotle, a friend as "a second self," and asserted that a voice should be "the flower of beauty." Since the death of Socrates there had been greater philosophers, but no man of such incisive personality.

Zeno was a prophet far more than a philosopher. There he was in Athens, a stranger, of an alien race, and although unsustained by any belief in a national god, and unsupported by any such traditions as comforted Semitic peoples in time of trouble, nevertheless he set himself to the prophet's task of proclaiming that there is dignity in human life, that there is meaning for men in the word *duty*, and that nothing is of any worth but righteousness and nothing evil but baseness. There is nothing novel in his philosophy. His dogma that man should live in harmony with nature, κατὰ φύσιν, that his soul should be in tune with the soul of all things, is a conception that lies at the bottom of all religions; it is expressed in theistic thought by the obedience of the human will to the divine will, and in Christianity by the prayer, "Thy will be done." Zeno might well have addressed those very words to the universe. The profound influence of his teaching was due, not to new ideas, but to the passion that he infused into them. His preaching brings to mind that of another great Semitic teacher, who also went to Athens: "God that made the world and all things therein, . . . dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth. . . . In him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring."

Zeno composed treatises *On the Nature of Man, On Hellenic Education, On the Theogony of Hesiod, On the Logos, On the Universe, On Substance, On Civil Polity,* and many others, rounding out his system so that it should meet all

the questions and criticisms of his quick-witted hearers; but nothing has come down to us but scattered fragments, which have been carefully collected together, and from these I have quoted. Zeno was to his generation what Carlyle was to our fathers; there is a kindred virility and tonic in their words, and the same manly, almost overbearing, attitude toward life. Sentences from *Sartor Resartus* and *Hero Worship* ring like echoes from the Painted Porch: "Evil once manfully fronted ceases to be evil; put generous battle hope in place of dead, passive misery, and evil itself becomes a kind of good. . . . Here, in this poor, miserable, hampered, despicable Actual, wherein even now thou standest, here or nowhere is thy Ideal: work it out therefrom; and working, believe, live, be free. Fool! the Ideal is in thyself, the impediment too is in thyself: thy condition is but the stuff thou art to shape that same Ideal out of: what matters whether such stuff be of this sort or that, so the form thou givest it be heroic."

Zeno possessed the stern, ascetic valor that stirs men to heroism, but he lacked other qualities, equally necessary if a prophet wishes to convert a philosophy into religion, the qualities of tenderness and poetical imagination. These deficiencies were supplied by Cleanthes, from Assos in Asia Minor, his successor as head of the Stoic School. The most notable remains of Cleanthes are in verse.

HYMN TO ZEUS

Most glorious of immortal gods, O Thou,
Of many names, almighty everlastingly,
O Zeus, O Nature's lord, who rulest all by law,
Hail!
'Tis meet for mortal men to call on Thee;
For we thy children are, and of all mortal things
That live and move on earth, are we alone
Made in Thine image. To Thee, therefore, I sing
My hymn and praise Thy power forever.

This universal frame that whirls around
The earth obeyeth Thee, whither thou lead'st
And, willing, does Thy will.

. . . . .

No work is done on earth but by Thy will, O Lord,
Not in th' ethereal, holy, sky, nor on the sea,—
Save what the wicked in their folly do.

Thou know'st how best to fence excess in bounds,
And order from disorder bring; in Thee
The unbeloved finds love; for Thou
Into one harmony all things hast wrought
Both good and ill, so that th' eternal reason
Of all that is in unity abides.

That *One* the wicked flee and let alone,
Ill-fated, for they ever crave to have
What good men have, but do not heed
The universal law of God; they hearken not.
Yet should they yield a wise obedience,
They would live happy lives. But in
Their folly on they rush, each to his several sin,—
Some with an ever striving zeal for fame,
Some with a lawless passion bent on gain,
Others to license and the body's lusts.
Despite their zeal they get the contrary
To what they wish.

But Thou, hid in black clouds,
And in the lightning flash, all-giving Zeus,
From baleful ignorance deliver men, O Father,
Dispel it from the soul, and grant to us
That wisdom to attain, wherein confiding
Thou guid'st all things aright, so that we may
Gain honor, and then render back to Thee
The honor we receive, and hymn Thy works
Unceasing; as befits men born to die,
Since not for mortal men nor for the gods
Is there a guerdon greater than to sing
Hymns to the praise of Universal Law
In righteousness forever.

Cleanthes, also, was the first, I believe, to introduce a distinction in the doctrine of determinism; while recognizing the absolute control of destiny, he tries to preserve a sort of spiritual freedom to the will, and, as was his wont in matters that touched his emotions, he embodied his idea in some simple verses:

> Lead me, O Zeus, and thou, O Destiny,
> Wherever ye have bid me take my place,
> And I shall follow unafraid.
> And though I coward turn and my will fail,
> None the less shall I follow.

In Marcus's time this distinction between the consenting will and the reluctant will was accepted doctrine. "Only to living creatures endowed with reason has it been given to follow the course of Fate with submissive will, for *to follow* is sheer necessity for all" (M. A. X, 28). And Seneca says, "Ducunt volentem fata nolentem trahunt, Him that is willing the Fates lead on, him that is unwilling they drag."

Cleanthes was succeeded by Chrysippus, who came from a little town in Cilicia, not far from Tarsus (the birthplace also of the poet Aratus whom St. Paul quoted in his speech on Mars' Hill), a man of less rugged personality than Zeno, less tender and poetic than Cleanthes, but of tireless zeal and industry. He wrote innumerable treatises, straightened crooked places in the Stoic system, filled in gaps, and gave it greater consistency and solidity. He seems to have been better known than Zeno to the Roman Stoics; at least Marcus Aurelius, who does not mention Zeno, classes Chrysippus with Socrates and Epicurus, and Juvenal speaks of plaster casts of him that adorned the houses of his professed admirers. But further than this Chrysippus does not concern us. These three men established the Stoic School.

CHAPTER II

STOIC ETHICS UNDER THE EMPIRE

BETWEEN the time of Chrysippus and the reign of Marcus Aurelius, Stoic philosophy, though not changed in theory with regard to the particulars that I have set forth, shifted its centre of gravity, turning more and more away from metaphysics and applying itself almost exclusively to the immediate business of conduct. If the reader takes up a book upon Greek philosophy and turns to the chapters that deal with the Stoic school, he will almost certainly find Stoicism treated as a philosophy, or as a system of universal knowledge. This may be proper so far as concerns what is called the Greek period of Stoicism, though it seems to me not unlikely that writers upon philosophy who have been pondering over the dialogues of Plato and the treatises of Aristotle, are too readily induced to see in Stoicism another form of Greek thought, rather than, as I venture to think they should do, a Hebraic gospel clothed in the garments of Greek philosophy. But whatever Stoicism may have been during the period of its home in Athens, it underwent a signal change when it emigrated to Rome. It was carried there by a very accomplished member of the school, the philosopher Panaetius, a native of the island of Rhodes, and imparted to Scipio Africanus the younger, then in the height of his glory as the destroyer of Carthage, and to the distinguished group of men who surrounded him. In a later generation, when Cicero was young, another very eminent philosopher, Posidonius, also of Rhodes, contributed to the spread and authority of the

Stoic doctrines. We know from Cicero, although in an imperfect fashion, what was contained in the "noble books of Panaetius" (as Horace calls them) and, from various sources, though in a more imperfect measure, the drift of Posidonius's philosophy. Cicero, and the Romans of his generation, took from these teachers their ethics and virtually nothing else. The reason of this was not due to the limited scope of what those philosophers taught, although they may have adapted their instruction to their audience, but to the Roman character and the Roman traditions of virtue.

The Athenians demanded a metaphysical basis for their ethical creed, because by nature they took pleasure in abstract thought and academic disputations. The Romans, on the other hand, were a practical people, indifferent to metaphysics and science, but deeply interested in matters of conduct; they listened to, and accepted, only such portions of Stoic teaching as suited their habitual needs. Of these borrowings, at least of such as are most important, it is necessary to speak, for they impregnate the intellectual atmosphere in which Marcus Aurelius was bred, and constitute the specific doctrines of the learned men who became his tutors. And first, passing by the doctrine of cosmopolitanism, of citizenship in the city of humanity (a doctrine rendered easy of acceptance by the varied character of the peoples united in the Roman Empire), let me dwell for a few moments on the nature of the cardinal virtues, *φρόνησις* (prudentia), *σωφροσύνη* (temperantia), *ἀνδρεία* (fortitudo), *δικαιοσύνη* (justitia). These heroic qualities, which, in spite of their distinguishing and separating names, have no determinate bounds, but blend into one another, represent the noblest ideals of the Romans, such as, according to accepted tradition, were embodied in Cato, the Scipios, and others, and may be said to constitute the moral dogmas of their national religion. Marcus Aurelius speaks of them

with the same respect with which the Romans of the Republic would have spoken of them, but he interprets them in an entirely new spirit of resignation, of devout submission to the universal will, and in doing so shows the profound change that has come over Roman religious ideals. He says: "If you find in human life anything better than justice, truth, temperance, fortitude, or, in short, than the contentment of your mind with itself (in matters where it shows you acting in accordance with sound reason), or than its contentment with whatever Fate allots you without your choosing—if, I say, you see anything better than this, turn to it with your whole soul, and enjoy the noblest that you can find" (M. A. III, 6). And again: "If a man will think of certain things as good in very truth, such as prudence, temperance, justice, and fortitude, then, with such principles in his mind he can no longer endure to hear riches being called good" (M. A. V, 12). My excuse for tarrying a moment more over these cardinal virtues, is that the usual English translations, which I have followed above, prudence, temperance, fortitude, and justice, taken over from the Latin, are unsatisfactory. Φρόνησις is not prudence but wisdom, and not untouched by those profoundly poetical ideas found in the Semitic books of *Wisdom:* "The very true beginning of her is the desire of discipline, and the care of discipline is love, and love is the keeping of her laws, and the giving heed unto her laws is the assurance of incorruption, and incorruption maketh us near unto God. Therefore the desire of wisdom bringeth to a kingdom." (*Wisdom of Solomon,* vi, 17-20.) Δικαιοσύνη is righteousness, much more than *justice* and is so translated in our English Bible (St. Matt. iii, 15; Romans x, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10; I Cor. i, 30); ἀνδρεία, although translated fortitude, is properly the Latin *virtus,* signifying manliness, courage, magnanimity, and love of honor. Σωφροσύνη can be but poorly translated by one English word. It means the condition of a sound mind; sobriety,

or self-mastery, is perhaps the least unsatisfactory equivalent. Our word *temperance* has another function, it is the equivalent for the Greek ἐγκράτεια, and is so rendered in the Bible. This fourth virtue comprehends what the Romans meant by *decorum,* and we by propriety, by conduct becoming a gentleman. It is the most delicate and the most sophisticated of the virtues. It implies a sense of fitness, consideration, carefulness, reasonableness, a readiness to give to each his due; and, in fact, it borrows freely from the other virtues, for it is impossible to imagine perfect propriety without wisdom, courage, or righteousness. It implies orderliness, and the art of saying and doing the right thing at the right time. It befits all matters of daily life, and operates at one time as harmony, at another as proportion, or still again, as tact or good taste. It prompts to good will. In short σωφροσύνη, as Cicero describes it (*De Officiis,* Book I, 27-28), leads men to act in harmony with nature; and is the virtue (as I think) which the Emperor Marcus had in mind in such passages as these: "It is the trait of a reasonable spirit to love his neighbor, to love truth and modesty, and to honor nothing more than reasonableness of spirit" (M. A. XI, 1). "When you have done a kind act to a man, what more do you want? Isn't it enough that you have acted in accord with your own nature? Are you looking for a reward of your act? As if the eye should ask to be paid for seeing, or the feet for walking? For just as eyes and feet were made for a particular service, and by doing that particular service come into their own, so a man was created by nature to do good; and when he has done a good action, or something that contributes to the general good, he has done what nature created him to do, and he has come into his own" (M. A. IX, 42, §5).

Such was the Stoics' ethical creed as it was accepted by the Roman world, and no doubt the letter of the Stoic doctrine remained very much the same even to the days of

Marcus Aurelius, but all the time the contents of that creed had been changing. The tone of the Roman temper, since the days of the Republic had changed, the whole moral atmosphere was different. The fullness of the Roman summer had passed, and there was already a touch of autumn in the air. But in some ways this autumnal quality manifested itself merely in greater ripeness. However much corruption displayed itself in the imperial palace, elsewhere there was an increase of tenderness, compassion, of justice from man to man. Latin literature shows a sorry falling off, but Roman law shows a handsome gain. Civilization has acquired some of the virtues that commonly go under the name of Christian. Marcus Aurelius is not a prodigy among men, unheralded by what has come before; on the contrary he is the ripe product of the spiritual movement that expressed itself in the Stoic philosophy, or rather, as it had then become, the Stoic religion. For even if we concede that Roman Stoicism in Cicero's time was still a matter of the intellect, within a few generations it had acquired the emotional coloring and spiritual significance that convert a philosophy into a religion. The austerity of early Stoicism had been softened by contact with life in the metropolis of the world, it had been tempered by other philosophies, especially by Epicureanism, it had loosed itself from the Hebraic dogmas of Zeno, and acquired a ripeness, a mellowness, that merely needed the saintliness of Marcus Aurelius to give it a religious spirit such as one can find elsewhere at that time only in Christianity.

This ripeness that I speak of is found in the writings of Seneca, but for various reasons Marcus was not drawn to him; he may have thought of Seneca as too closely associated with the infamous memory of Nero, or he may have felt that Seneca's luxurious life, his wealth, his villas and gardens, his love of fame, gave the lie to his Stoical profession; and it is certain that he was taught from earliest boyhood

to detest the particular form of rhetoric in which Seneca habitually expressed himself. Besides, Marcus had at hand a book in which spiritual exhortation equal to the best of Seneca was to be found, together with an earnestness and sincerity beyond the reach of incredulity. The Emperor never forgot his gratitude to the Stoic, Rusticus, who presented it to him (M. A. I, 7). It seems to have become his favorite book, to have served him in its own way, as the Bible has served to strengthen and comfort Christians in their seasons of discouragement or sorrow. He quotes it frequently, and time and again his thoughts are echoes of its teaching. The Emperor speaks of this book as the "memorabilia of Epictetus"; whereas such teachings of Epictetus as have come down to us consist of a collection of "discourses," written out by a pupil, and a "manual," which is a compendium of the discourses; they are no doubt a part at least of what the Emperor refers to. As evidence of the religious character of Stoic philosophy at this time, I quote various extracts from Epictetus in the Appendix.

These are simple precepts, and this is a simple philosophy; indeed it is obviously less a philosophy than an endeavor to illumine conduct with religious emotion, and give to men something steadfast to fix their eyes upon in place of the shifting shadows that constitute life. The habit of mind that Epictetus represents is eternal in humanity; it is akin to that of the disciples of Buddha, as well as to that of the Hebrew prophets. The great end that he set before himself is peace of the soul. The disciples of Buddha, bred in their eastern civilization, so foreign to us, were far more thorough than is possible for the children of the West. According to them, misery is the inseparable companion of life, and not to be cast off except by casting away all desire; he that awakens to these truths must free himself from impure hopes, from ignorance, from wrong beliefs, as well as from all uncharitableness. The Roman Stoics, such

as Seneca, for instance, members of a conquering race, lords of the world, could hardly get rid of all sense of the worth of life, especially the worth of a happy life. But Epictetus was not a Roman; he had the feelings and the experience, not of a conqueror, but of the conquered, and for this reason, as well as because of his natural disposition and of the humble circumstances of his birth, he was able to approach more readily to the ideas of complete renunciation and resignation than was possible for Seneca, or any member of the dominant race. For Epictetus life *itself* is not miserable, but life not in harmony with the divine reason *is* miserable, and the way to deliver oneself from misery is to set one's desires on those things only that lie within one's own control and, by doing so, break all the snares of false thoughts that mistake for good that which is not good; and then the soul set free can fly back as the pigeon flies to its cot, and live at one with the divine reason. This accord will bring peace to the soul. It is not easy, however, to withdraw our appetites from the thousand earthly pleasures that glitter in the flattering light of imagination, and find satisfaction for our souls in a few stark and stern principles.

For the Stoic the solution of the riddle, the unbuckling of the collar of vanity, lies in the discipline of the will. The road of life forks; there is the road of pleasure and the road of discipline. Either the meaning of life lies in living to the utmost in the passing hour, (so long as pleasure does not draw upon the account that shall be necessary to satisfy tomorrow's desires,) to give ourselves up to the wonderful drama in which we play the part of hero or heroine, and to fill "heart and soul and senses" with the satisfactions that come and go, and be content with what comes and goes; or, the meaning of life lies in directing the spirit toward complete obedience to the divine, whatever our measure of hope that this goal may be attained. The Stoics adjure us to lift up our eyes to this spiritual coöperation which the Hebrews

would have called walking with God. All their rules are to help us extricate ourselves from the meshes which the senses, misled (as they assert) by the imagination, cast about us. Other teachers, of quite different schools and creeds, teach the same doctrine; but such other schools and creeds try to give us the power of escape, by the quickening of the spirit, by the stimulus of passion, of mystic fervor, of dogmatic hope. They strive to give the spirit wings. The Stoic, on the contrary, plants his feet upon the ground, he sets up, in its cold and stern simplicity, the ideal of a life that disdains the pleasures, the temptations, the weakness, of ordinary humanity. His appeal is to the personal dignity of man, as a sharer in the divine dignity of God. It is, perhaps, this appeal to a sense of personal dignity that gives to Stoicism its imperishable value. To the Stoics a man's inner, permanent self is like the image of Pallas Athene in her temple. It must be kept inviolate, high above the commotion of life, untouched by the marring passions of hate, revenge, grief, or desire; it must be approached and ministered to, even in privacy, with the reverence due to the goddess. It is a feeling akin to the chivalric ideal of honor. "La vie n'est ni un plaisir, ni une douleur, c'est une affaire grave dont nous sommes chargés, qu'il faut conduire et terminer avec honneur." The Stoic's honor bound him, by a devout allegiance, to his lord, the universal reason. And, if this attitude of soul presents on one side an aspect of pride, on the other it presents an aspect of faith, more than Christian in its simplicity, that the doings of the universal reason are worthy of this devout obedience. Epictetus pushes this simple faith, this trustful confidence, further even than Seneca, further than any of the sect, and beyond where the Emperor Marcus is able to follow him.

It may be, if we do not find in ourselves the power to forsake the leadership of reason, that there can be no nobler ethical ideal than this of the Stoics, and that no man can

do better than seek to pattern his life upon it. But, quite apart from any philosophical deficiencies, it lies open to this suspicion. A man, in his effort to accept it, may bring himself to cast off or disregard, one by one, the objects of ordinary human desire, which the Stoics judge to be evil, or, at best, matters of indifference, not merely ease, luxury, fame, the passions, but also health, good repute, and the affections; and, climbing higher and higher to a sinless summit, bring himself into harmony with what he deems to be the processes of Eternal Reason: but if he does, to what has he attained, but an infinite loneliness of soul? And, as he approaches that cold perfection, suppose his heart shall fail him at the sight, may it not be too late then to turn back, retrace his steps, accept the lower standards of common men, and once more warm his hands at the fire of life? It is impossible to read the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius and not to suspect, with a sinking of the heart, that the crown of absolute resignation to the universal reason is as vain a thing as the meanest passing pleasure. But this is the skepticism of a humanity compounded of the dust of the earth. There is humanity of another kind. The sculptor, who plans, models, changes, contemplates, touches and retouches, squandering his heart on planes and surfaces, on poise, balance, proportion, and harmony, in valiant strife to give to each several contour of his statue the force and delicacy that he sees in his mind's eye, may serve as a comparison. So, the Stoic looks upon the lump of matter committed to his charge, and works over it, with the artist's infinite patience and the artist's intensity of passion, in order to produce a soul without a blemish. And, whether any intelligence, divine or human, shall behold what he has done, or whether this object radiate its noble beauty in an infinite dark, and but for a moment of time, is that moment not cheaply bought with the renunciation of all lesser things? But however this may be, unless it is Marcus Aurelius, no

other man has climbed so high as to attain the Stoics' goal; and to us common men, who lack the sight to see the outstretched hands of a personal God, their teachings furnish a rod and a staff that help us as we travel along the rough road of life.

CHAPTER III

BOYHOOD AND YOUTH

THE Emperor Domitian, of evil fame, by whom all philosophers including Epictetus were banished from Rome, died in the year 96 A. D. He was succeeded by a series of able men of high character, known as the good emperors, who have won from the greatest of modern historians this honorable encomium: "If a man were called to fix the period in the history of the world during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous, he would, without hesitation, name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus. The vast extent of the Roman Empire was governed by absolute power, under the guidance of virtue and wisdom. The armies were restrained by the firm but gentle hand of four successive emperors, whose characters and authority commanded involuntary respect. The labors of these monarchs were overpaid by the immense reward that inseparably waited on their success; by the honest pride of virtue, and by the exquisite delight of beholding the general happiness of which they were the authors." (*Decline and Fall,* etc., Chap. III.)

The gentle Nerva reigned but a year or two (96-98); his greatest achievement was to select Trajan as his colleague and successor. Trajan (98-117) was an upright man, an excellent administrator, and of very great abilities as a soldier, who spent much of his reign waging war, and added the provinces of Dacia, Armenia, Mesopotamia, Assyria, and Arabia to the Empire. He was succeeded by Hadrian (117-138), perhaps the most tantalizing figure in Roman history,

for only enough is known of him to show that, in addition to the national qualities that had made the Romans a dominant race, he possessed many talents quite alien to their character. He proved himself a remarkable commander of men, firm of will, steady of hand, strict in discipline, quick to reward merit, and competent to direct large armies; he was richly endowed with common sense and foresight; he devised a military policy for the defence of the Empire, drew up the necessary regulations to put that policy into action, and enforced them. And yet, with all these high soldierly qualities, no sooner was he Emperor than he gave up the provinces in the east beyond the river Euphrates, which Trajan had lately conquered, and withdrew the boundary of the Roman Empire back to the river. He studied with minute attention the various needs of the several parts of the Empire; and in order to learn those needs, he travelled east and west, north and south, through the length and breadth of the whole Roman realm. It seems probable that a roving intellectual curiosity lay beneath this policy; like Ulysses he became "a name, for always roaming with a hungry heart." He was eager to be acquainted with all conditions of men, and all sorts of things. He was a lover of the arts, of music, painting, and sculpture, a connoisseur and dilettante; he was a great builder; he was also a scholar, familiar with Greek literature, a lover of Athens and of Athenian glory, and he wrote poetry; he was inquisitive about philosophy and religions, "curiositatum omnium explorator," according to the phrase of Tertullian. Of all this bustling interest in life scarce a vestige is left. Marcus Aurelius says: "The very names of the much-sung heroes of old need a glossary now . . .; soon will those of Hadrian and Antoninus. So quick doth human glory fade into legend, so quick is it sunk in oblivion." (M. A. IV, 33.) And yet the Muse of history might have dealt more tenderly with Hadrian. His parks and temples at Tivoli, and his attach-

ment to the handsome youth Antinous, who was drowned in the Nile, are the best-known circumstances in his life. So enduring was the memory of this young man's beauty and of the imperial homage, that long after Hadrian's death, priests celebrated sacred rites in temples dedicated to the Divine Antinous. Apart from these facts little definite is known. A beggarly biography of much later date gives a few scraps of information of doubtful trustworthiness; for the rest one must build up a fabric of conjecture from coins, inscriptions, the ruins of buildings, and such things. This much is certain; Hadrian maintained peace and order to a degree rare in Roman history. During the last years of his life his health was infirm, and he suffered much pain. Report says that he became morose and cruel; such stories were very acceptable to writers of Roman imperial history. They may be true. At any rate, toward the end, his old skeptical, playful humor flashed up, and he greeted death with smiling verses:

Animula vagula blandula
hospes comesque corporis,
quae nunc abibis in loca
pallidula, rigida, nudula;
nec ut soles, dabis jocos?

Little soul, wanderer, flatterer,
Companion and guest of my body,
To what places now are you going,
Pallid, and rigid, and naked;
No more to jest, as you used to?

Marcus Aurelius was born in the fourth year of Hadrian's reign, on April 26, 121, in his father's house on Mons Caelius, that rising ground, hardly a hill, at the southern end of Rome, whither sight-seers now go to see the charming apse of SS. Paolo e Giovanni and the ancient church of San Stefano Rotondo. His ancestors, though of Italian stock, came from Spain, as the Senecas, Hadrian's family,

and Trajan himself, had done. His grandfathers and great-grandfathers were of the highest official rank; his father, whom he speaks of as distinguished for manliness and modesty (M. A. I, 2), died young, not long after his son's birth, and before he had had time to rise higher than the rank of praetor. His father's sister, Faustina, had married a man of solid reputation and brilliant promise, Titus Aurelius Antoninus, a friend and counsellor of Hadrian.

After his father's death, Marcus lived in his paternal grandfather's house, which was near by, close to where the church of St. John Lateran now stands, and later on, so it seems, perhaps when his grandfather grew very old, in his mother's house again. (M. A. IX, 21.) The relation between him and his mother was very intimate. "She taught me," he writes in his note-book, "the fear of God, charity, and not only to keep from doing evil but even from thinking evil, and simplicity in my way of living, far removed from the habits of the rich." (M. A. I, 3.) Her name was Domitia Lucilla. She had been educated in the polite learning of the day; at least she was familiar with Greek, and must have heard it spoken in her father's house, at the time when a young Athenian, Herodes Atticus, afterwards a very eminent man of letters and one of her son's teachers, enjoyed her father's hospitality and applied himself to learn the customs of Rome.

Marcus was brought up after the manner of boys in those patrician households that held fast to the simple and austere traditions of earlier days. He did not go to school, but studied with tutors at home. In that part of his note-book printed as Book I, where he records his gratitude to the persons to whom he thinks himself principally indebted, he speaks with respect and affection of his tutors. It is plain, as one would conjecture, that all or most of them were of the Stoic school. They taught him the Stoic morals, to eschew gladiatorial shows, races, quail fights, and suchlike

amusements, to have few wants, to welcome hard work, to put up with plain speech, in short, the usual Stoic tenets. Marcus drank in these notions of a simple life so greedily that at the age of eleven he affected the philosopher's cloak, the pallet bed, and all the accoutrements of the Cynic tradition, until for his health's sake his mother interfered. The other studies usual for young men were of course not neglected, grammar, rhetoric, mathematics. The fact that he wrote his private meditations in Greek, is the best evidence that he was very familiar with that language, although German scholars have detected in his phraseology evidences that it was not his mother tongue.

His likeness in marble, that now stands in the Capitoline Museum, made at an indeterminate time between boyhood and manhood, shows him to have been of a most engaging appearance. His frank, honest, boyish face, fine forehead, and curly hair, present what might well pass as an allegorical statue of candor, of adolescent innocence. This truthful look must have been characteristic even when he was a very little boy, for the Emperor Hadrian, playing on his family name, Verus, called him Verissimus; and the name stuck. It is found even on coins. The Emperor gave other proofs of his interest and good will; he entered him at the age of six among the knights, at eight in the college of Salic priests, the early steps for a high official career. A few years later, greater honors were to come.

When Marcus was about fifteen, the childless Emperor, who was growing old and infirm, appointed a successor. This he did, according to the imperial custom, by adopting a favorite of his, Lucius Ceionius Commodus Verus, as his son, and conferred upon him, as the official designation of heir apparent, the title of Caesar. Lucius Verus was a man of the highest fashion, very handsome, eloquent, well read in literature, quick at making verses, and full of the enjoyment of life. It would seem that like his son, of whom more

hereafter, he was a very winning and agreeable companion. There exists a brief biography of him, together with Hadrian's, among a little collection of biographies of the Emperors of the second and third centuries. The writers of this book, *Scriptores Historiae Augustae,* lived some two centuries after Hadrian's time, and although they have preserved some valuable information taken from earlier histories, they have stuffed their pages with all the vulgar scandal they could lay hold of, much of it monstrous and obviously false. These low-minded writers, (however trustworthy so far as they bear testimony to the degeneracy of history and literature in their own time,) could not believe that decency exists in a palace. But as Marcus Aurelius says, ἔστιν εὖ ζῆν ἐν αὐλῇ, it is possible to live well in a palace (M. A. V, 16). If there was laxity in the time of Hadrian, it could not have been very gross in a court where Antoninus was one of the principal figures, for the whole ancient world was agreed that he possessed all the virtues. Lucius Verus was not a puritan, he probably lived after the luxurious, self-indulgent, dissipated fashion of the Roman nobles of the lewder sort; but Hadrian, who was deeply interested in the Empire, was not the man to appoint a mere pleasure lover to succeed him. Lucius Verus had a son, Lucius, at that time a very little boy, and also a daughter. At the Emperor's wish the girl was betrothed to Marcus Aurelius. It is plain that the Emperor anticipated a great career for Marcus; and it is incredible that he should have proposed to bring together a mere debauchee and this young embodiment of innocence. Lucius Verus, however, died within a few years, on January 1, 138; and the very next month, Hadrian adopted Antoninus as his son and successor, and in order to secure an entail of the Empire, added to the terms of adoption a clause that Antoninus should adopt both his sister's son Marcus, who was then nearly seventeen, and young Lucius Verus, a boy of seven. It was the first time an

Emperor had attempted to name his successor's successor, but the imperial constitution was unwritten and indefinite; and Hadrian acted, no doubt, in what he believed to be the best interest of the State. The choice of Marcus is easily understood; so is that of Lucius Verus, though made for quite a different reason. Hadrian had been deeply attached to the father, and after his death had kept the boy in his palace as a member of the imperial family; it is likely that he grew fond of him, and also that he conceived that young Verus himself, or others on his behalf, might think that the father's designation as Caesar conferred upon the son some inheritable claim upon the throne, and might in the future give occasion to jealousies, if not to civil war. There was a further stipulation in the settlement of succession, that Antoninus should betroth his daughter Faustina to Lucius. The plan was to give the government whatever stability might be got from dynastic marriages. Hadrian died that summer, and Antoninus succeeded to the throne.

By the adoption, Marcus had become son of Antoninus and grandson of Hadrian, and accordingly had gone at once to live with his imperial grandfather Hadrian. It is said that the burden of Empire cast its dark shadow before, and that Marcus left his house on the Caelian Hill, and the freedom attached to the condition of a subject, with unfeigned regret. On the death of Hadrian, Marcus became a member of his imperial father's household and lived in the great palace of Tiberius on the north slope of the Palatine Hill. This was his home, while in the city, except that he seems to have lived for a time by the banks of the Tiber. His mother went with him. Here began, or continued, for before they became father and son they may have been close friends as uncle and nephew, one of the most beautiful friendships between man and man that history records.

Antoninus was a great lover of the country and country pleasures, and when he was free to take a holiday, or was

able to transact the business of State away from Rome, off he went, taking his family with him. His two favorite places were Lorium, a village on the Via Aurelia, some dozen miles west of Rome, where he had spent his boyhood, and Lanuvium, the hill town where he was born. He built a villa at Lorium, and may have found there some special charm of wood, or field, or in the stretches and windings of the river Arrone, for he was fond of fishing, hunting, and walking; but Lanuvium, famous in early history, had much more character. It stood on a western spur of the Alban Hills, just off the Via Appia, about twenty miles south of Rome. The town of Aricia is near by, and the Lago di Nemi. Lanuvium was a pious place, filled with temples, chief among them a famous shrine to Juno Sospita, and perhaps the most recent was that to the Divine Antinous. These temples were decorated with mural paintings of more than local renown, which perhaps were interesting to the young prince, who among his other lessons had studied painting. Lanuvium was also celebrated for its traditions and legends. On the slope of the hill was a cave, and within the cave a sacred serpent lay asleep, and every year a troop of girls went thither, carrying little baskets of barley cakes to feed the serpent; and if there was one among them who was not a virgin, the serpent would refuse to eat, and then a blight would fall upon the harvest for that year. And there was worse than this. By the side of the beautiful lake of Nemi, at the distance of an easy walk from Lanuvium, down in a half ravine, was a sacred grove, and in the grove a temple to Diana. Long, long ago, as the story went, Iphigenia and her brother Orestes had fled from Tauris, after having killed King Thoas and stolen the statue of Diana, and had found refuge at the lake of Nemi; and therefore at that spot a temple had been built. Within the sacred enclosure lived a solitary priest, a fugitive from justice. Here he remained in safety, except for a single danger. At any time another

slave, flying from justice, might come and kill him, and take for himself the solitary safety of the sacred spot. So the occupant was always expectant, sword in hand. Perhaps these dark traditions and legends had aroused fearful apprehension in the mind of Marcus as a little boy, for he records his gratitude to his tutor, Diognetus, who "taught him not to believe what sorcerers and wizards said about incantations, and exorcising evil spirits, and things of that kind" (M. A. I, 6). And perhaps, long afterwards, the memories of these evil mysteries blended with stories current about the novel superstitions and dark practices of an oriental sect that was cropping up, here and there, all over the Empire, and prompted him to record this particular matter for thankfulness, that his mind was untouched by what he judged to be the degradation of superstitious thoughts.

Marcus relished the country and its pleasures, though perhaps with not so keen a zest as Antoninus. As a boy he took his full share in athletic games and outdoor sports after the manner of young Roman patricians. He liked boxing, wrestling, running, fowling, throwing the javelin, but most of all, riding, playing ball, and hunting the wild boar, and like Antoninus, he enjoyed friendly relations with the peasants and husbandmen of the neighborhood, and delighted to pick grapes with them in the vintage season. At bottom, he was primarily a student and a lover of books, and he always had a liking for solitude and communion with his own thoughts, but he was not so uncompanionable as his *Meditations* suggest. He contracted a real intimacy with Aufidius Victorinus, and Seius Fuscianus, two young noblemen, as well as others, who seem to have remained his friends all their lives. He did not avoid company, either of his friends or mere acquaintances. It is said of him, at this period of his life, that he was virtuous but not priggish, modest but not prudish, serious-minded but not low-spirited,

and, in spite of his rapid elevation in rank, that he remained just as natural, familiar, and kind, as ever, with his relations. He was always punctual at his lessons, and he used to visit the sick.

It is probable that it was not until after Marcus had been adopted as heir apparent, that the most distinguished of his teachers were engaged for him. It seems certainly so in the case of some of them. Fronto (who, after Marcus Aurelius, will be the principal personage in this little book) taught him rhetoric and Latin literature. Herodes Atticus, the old friend of his family, a man of high birth, enormous wealth, and of great reputation, taught him Greek. Sextus, a grandson of Plutarch, Junius Rusticus, who when Marcus became Emperor held the office of City Prefect, and Claudius Maximus, seem to have taught him what they may have called ethics or Stoic philosophy, but what we might call lessons upon life or lessons of wisdom. Marcus speaks of them all, with admiration and tender affection, except Herodes Atticus, who, in spite of various good qualities, was a conceited, self-important, quarrelsome person, and him he does not mention. (M. A. I, 7, 9, 11, 15.) Perhaps his veneration for Claudius Maximus was greater than for any of the others. He speaks of him as the pattern of goodness, a man in whom sweetness and seriousness were happily commingled.

Marcus gave much of his time to the liberal arts, but his hardest studies lay in practical government. At seventeen he became quaestor, at eighteen he was raised to the consulship and received the formal title of Caesar. His duties in these positions, as well as life in the imperial palace, brought him into very close intimacy with the Emperor, and it was this close intimacy, far more than his books, more even than his tutors, that constituted the chief factor in his education. There have been several very famous friendships in history, between David and Jonathan, Montaigne and LaBoétie, Sir

Philip Sidney and Fulke Greville, Goethe and Schiller, and others, and of such friendships, one or both of the friends have left eloquent memorials, but I know of no eulogy so deliberate, so full, so free from the emotional extravagance of conscious loss, as that which Marcus Aurelius dedicated to his father, long years afterwards, while fighting the Barbarians among the forests and marshes along the Danube.

Lessons from my Father.

Gentleness, and unshakeable firmness in decisions come to after full deliberation: no vain glory in what men call honors: love of hard work, perseverance, and a ready ear for those who have anything to propose for the common good: an unswerving determination to give to every man according to his deserts: a knowledge, got by experience, of when it is right to insist, and when to let things go: consideration for others, how he left his friends quite free to dine with him or not, and under no obligation to attend him abroad; and how men who had stayed away constrained by some necessity or other, always found him just the same: his habit of thorough investigation at the council board, his persistency, and, further, his refusal to desist from inquiry and to rest satisfied with plausible impressions: his constancy to his friends, never fickle nor foolishly fond of them: his sufficiency unto himself on every occasion and his cheerfulness: his great foresight, and his provision for the smallest details without making a fuss about them: how he checked cheers and applause and all kinds of flattery: his watchful care over the interests of the Empire, his management of its resources, and his patience under the condemnation he was subjected to in consequence: his freedom from superstition in his attitude toward the gods; and, in his attitude toward men, no chase after popularity, no efforts to please them, no humoring the mob, but always sobriety, and steadiness; never any vulgarity or eagerness for new things.

And as to those things that contribute to the comfort of life, which fortune had heaped upon him, his use of them without arrogance and at the same time without apology, so that when they were at hand he partook of them without ostentation, and when they were not he went without. And none could say that he was a sophist or a pedant, or had any qualities of the servile courtier, but he was ripe, finished, unaffected by praise, well able to manage his own affairs and also those of other people.

Besides this his deep respect for true philosophers, (he was polite even to humbugs,) and yet he was not easily led by them. And also he was affable and gracious but not to excess. And he took proper care of his body, (though not as a lover of physical life,) and he never gave too much or too little attention to his good looks, but did just right, so that by the care he took, he hardly ever needed a doctor, or medicines, or bandages.

And above all his deference, and freedom from envy, toward those who possessed any special accomplishment, such as oratory, of knowledge of law, or ethics, or any other subject; and he did his best for them so that each should receive full recognition, according to his special excellence; and he always acted in accordance with traditional usages, not in order to make a display of doing so, but for the sake of preserving such usages.

Furthermore, he was not unstable or vacillating, but he liked to frequent the same places, and do the same things; and, after violent headaches, he would come back, fresh and vigorous, to his usual occupations. He had very few secrets, and those very seldom, and only about affairs of State. He displayed prudence and moderation in the management of public shows, in the construction of public works, and in distributing bounties, and such matters, as a man does who looks sharp at what ought to be done, and not to the reputation that may come from what he does.

He did not frequent the baths at all hours, and he had no special liking for building; he was not particular about what he ate, nor the texture or color of his clothes, nor the smart appearance of his slaves. His robes were made at Lorium, or his villa on the coast, but most of his clothes at Lanuvium.

There was nothing harsh about him, nor overbearing, nor violent, nor (as the saying is) did he 'get into a sweat,' but everything was considered each by itself, (as if he were quite at leisure,) without any confusion, in an orderly fashion, vigorously, and consistently. One might apply to him what was said of Socrates, that he was able both to refrain from, and to enjoy, those pleasures which most men are either weak in withstanding or overready to embrace. To be strong, to persist and not go too far, belongs to a man of perfect and unconquerable soul. (M. A. I, 16.)

Perhaps gratitude for kindness and high influences during twenty-three years of constant and unclouded intimacy, or the sad loneliness of an exquisite spirit in the rough Roman camps beside the Danube, has heightened the lights in this picture, but it accords with the serene and noble effigy of Antoninus in the Capitoline Museum, and with the unanimous testimony of history.

CHAPTER IV

LITERARY SOCIETY IN ROME

IN Rome at this time, while Marcus was still in his student years, there was a clever, cultivated society interested in literature and philosophy, and more particularly concerning itself with rhetoric and matters of grammar. The art of the *conférencier* was seriously taken, as it is in Paris today. Those who have heard M. Jean Richepin, for instance, will be able to understand the enthusiasm of persons of literary taste in the reign of Antoninus Pius over a discourse on any subject that offered scope for the display of imagination, wit, or erudition, and was artistically designed with exordium and peroration, with climax and happy turns of phrase, with a finished elegance of sentence, and a display of tropes and similes. Sometimes the *conférencier* spoke in Latin, sometimes in Greek. Men of letters, devoted wholly to the art, would travel about to the principal cities of the Empire from Antioch and Ephesus, to Athens, Alexandria, Rome, and as far as Lyons, giving lectures. Of these the versatile Lucian, of Samosata, a city by the Euphrates, is far and away the most brilliant; at least he seems so to us, who base our opinions on permanence in literature, and are perhaps overready to decry talents that only satisfy the taste of their own generation. Lucian would give a *conférence* on *Slander,* on *Companions for Hire,* in praise of *The Fly,* in defense of *The Tyrant,* or deliver a humorous satire on some fanatical philosopher, or popular charlatan, mixing together truth, exaggeration, misrepresentation, and fancy, with stories worthy of Baron

Munchausen, and affect to present the racy compound as a true narrative. One might as well give credence to Gulliver's travels. Lucian was a Syrian, or a Greek perhaps, ready to make fun of all the world, and had no reputation for seriousness to uphold. Others, like Polemon or Aelius Aristides, perhaps because they lacked Lucian's wit and fancy, were serious enough, and in Rome the traditional dignity of the conquering people still maintained itself.

Among the clever men of letters who were drawn to Rome, was Favorinus of Lyons. He may serve as a type of the literary figures familiar to Marcus in his youth. Favorinus was a philosopher and scholar, very well read in Greek, and by no means deficient in a knowledge of Latin literature. He was eloquent, ready, able to turn an epigram, endowed with a prodigious memory and, in addition to all that, was a very agreeable companion. Among other works he had written a book on skeptical philosophy, but he did not disdain less serious matters, and, after the fashionable manner of the day, enjoyed propounding a paradox, such as an argument in praise of Thersites, or of a quartan fever.

It was the custom at his house, when he invited guests to dinner, for a slave to read aloud out of some Latin or Greek author; and from what was read he would choose a topic for conversation. The topic might be Socrates, or a line of Virgil, Lucretius, Pindar, or Euripides, or a stanza from some lyrical poet, or again, some point of history, or a question of ethics, as for instance, Sallust's denunciation of avarice. At other times, he and friends of like tastes, Apollinaris Sulpicius, a scholar, Sextus Caecilius, an eminent lawyer, and others, would meet in Trajan's forum, at the bath, or in one of the public libraries, or perhaps, in the vestibule of the imperial palace while waiting for the Emperor to appear, and converse on matters of rhetoric. If the weather was cold, the friends might stroll to and fro on the sunny side of some high walled building; or if it was

summer time, they would go out of town to a friend's villa, on the coast at Alsium, Ostia, or Antium (now Porto d'Anzio). One of the younger of these literary men, Aulus Gellius, harbored a great admiration for Favorinus, and, with a respect bordering so close on veneration that it recalls Boswell to one's mind, jotted down in his note-book various anecdotes of his celebrated friend, which show him to have been a man of sense, and also that this literary club, as one may call it, was not wholly given over to the vapidity of a rhetoric divorced from life. Once a young prig joined their company, and made an ostentatious parade of antiquated words, and on being brought to book, justified the practice by his profound regard for antiquity, its probity, its temperance and self-control, "Well and good," said Favorinus, "fashion your conduct on the antique pattern, but speak the language of your generation." He was severe upon the great luxury of Roman banquets, couches of gold and silver, purple robes, rare and exquisite dishes: "If luxury continues at this pace, there will be nothing left for us, but to hire people to save us the trouble of eating." He was a reader of Epictetus, and greatly admired the famous apothegm "Bear and forbear." The conversation, however, usually got round to niceties of expression, or other points of literary criticism. "Change a word in Plato," he said, "and you mar the elegance of his language; change a word in Lysias, and you mar his meaning." He was delighted by a line in the *Nervolaria* of Plautus, that describes some women of the town, "scrattae, scrupipedae, strittivilae, sordidae, *hideous, hobbling, hangdog harlots,*" and asserted that you might know by this one line that Plautus had written the play. And once, when the discussion turned on the familiar saying that it is dangerous to marry a woman too ugly or too beautiful, Favorinus remarked that the two extremes were wide apart, and that there might be a mean. Somebody quoted Ennius as authority that *stata* (middling) was the

proper word to describe the middle type; but Favorinus suggested *uxoria* (wifely).

The most distinguished member of this group, however, was Marcus Cornelius Fronto, a man of many talents, who had left his native town, Cirta, in northern Africa, to make his fortune in Rome, and had been successful to a rare degree. He ran a brilliant career at the bar, often arguing cases of great importance before the Senate; he became famous as an orator, and was regarded as the head of the world of letters, a master of style, and an admirable critic of literature. Like his contemporaries, he indulged in the fashion of paradoxical essays, and wrote *On Sleep, On Smoke, On Dust,* and other such subjects. He was a close friend of Favorinus, and seems to have become the centre of that coterie of intellectual men. His conversation was noted for the purity of his language, and for the range and accuracy of his information. One day Favorinus introduced young Aulus Gellius at Fronto's house; they came upon the usual company, and fell to talking about language. Favorinus said that there were more words to express shades of color in Greek than in Latin. Fronto took up the argument on behalf of Latin: "We will not deny that the Greek language, to which you have awarded the palm, is more varied and copious than our own; but as to these colors you have mentioned, red for instance, our poverty is not so lean as you suppose, for the words *rufus* and *ruber,* which you bring up, are not our only words to denote a red color. We have others, and even more than you have cited from the Greek. *Fulvus, flavus, rubidus, phoeniceus, rutilus, luteus,* and *spadix,* all express varieties of red, increasing its splendor as with fire, blending it with green, darkening it with black, or making it more luminous with white"; and he quoted Ennius, Pacuvius, and Virgil in evidence of his assertions. When he had finished, Favorinus, with the candor and courtesy of good society in southern lands, praised his ripe

knowledge and his nice use of language: "Were it not for you, my dear Fronto, there is no doubt but that the Greek language would be far ahead of ours, but thanks to what you have done, as the verse from Homer puts it,

You have won, or left the victory in doubt."

Another day, one of the guests read aloud from a Roman historian, Claudius Quadrigarius, this passage: "After the assembly was dispersed, Metellus went to the Capitol *cum multis mortalibus* (in the company of many mortals) and on his way home from there all the city went with him." Somebody spoke up and said, that the phrase *cum multis mortalibus* instead of *cum multis hominibus,* for an episode in history, was absurd and frigid, that it savored too much of poetry. Fronto turned to the speaker: "Will you, a man of such exquisite taste in other matters, maintain that the phrase *cum multis mortalibus* is absurd and stiff? Do you suppose that Quadrigarius, whose style is so pure and yet almost colloquial, had no motive for saying *mortalibus* rather than *hominibus?* Now, in my opinion—unless it may be that my fondness, my veneration, for this author, and for our ancient speech, render my judgment blind—the word *mortales* has a far wider and more comprehensive significance in describing the concourse of a whole city, than *homines.* The expression *multi homines* may be comprised and contained within a moderate number, but *multi mortales,* in some peculiar way that I cannot exactly explain, includes all people of every kind in the city, of every rank, age and sex. And as Quadrigarius wished to describe (as it happens) a vast number of people, commingled in a medley, he said, 'Metellus came *cum multis mortalibus* to the Capitol,' and depicted the incident *avec beaucoup plus d'emphase* than if he had said *cum multis hominibus.*" The whole company admired Fronto's defence of the author, and Aulus

Gellius noted down "his accurate and subtle distinction between words."

On another day, a distinguished company of men, noted for their rank, their riches, or their learning, had met at Fronto's house. Fronto was lying down on a Greek couch, his gouty leg stretched out, examining various plans for a new bath that he proposed to build. He selected one of the plans, and asked how much it would cost. The architect replied, three hundred thousand sesterces ($15,000). Somebody, knowing the ways of architects, put in "you may add fifty thousand sesterces more, *praeter propter* (or thereabouts)." One of the company, a grammarian, passing over the dig at architects, objected to the words *praeter propter,* as a vulgar expression heard from the mouths of mechanics. Fronto, however, supported the phrase, and quoted a passage from Ennius, with the very words in it. And so the conversations went; was Julius Caesar right to insist that *arena not arenae,* sand not sands, was the correct expression? Is *pumiliones,* or *nani,* the better Latin word for dwarfs? At least such were the matters that interested Aulus Gellius and found their way into his note-book.

These men were scholars, or at least of scholarly tastes. They had enjoyed the best liberal education that an age interested in liberal studies had to give, first at the provincial university, such as that at Carthage, and afterwards at Athens, or at Rome. They were familiar with "the best that had been thought and written" on philosophy, rhetoric, history, literature, and philology. But they lacked creative power. They felt no stimulus from life itself, no need to relieve a teeming imagination by putting into words, whether of poetry or prose, thoughts that welled up within impatient minds. They were not young in spirit; they never drank of the intoxicating cup of intellectual, moral, or spiritual adventure. They trod anew the old paths. They lived, it is obvious enough, in a narrowing world, and looked back at

the larger freedom of the past with a sort of benumbed admiration. It was an age, as the books say, of criticism, of classification, analysis, and comparisons. There are plain marks of decadence, unmistakeable signs that herald the closing of an era; but among them, cropping up here and there, scanty because so little of what they wrote has come down to us, are traces of the beauty and charm, as well as of the frivolity and sensuous refinement, that accompanies overripeness and the downward road. Such traces are Fronto's fable of *Sleep,* the story of *Cupid and Psyche* in Apuleius, and the poem *Pervigilium Veneris.*

Nevertheless these men had a purpose, and strove to achieve it. Authors, orators, scholars, grammarians, were trying to effect a change in literary Latin, and they set about it definitely and resolutely. To us the vanity of their effort, comparable in its way to that of Marcus Aurelius to cure the ills of the world by the precepts of Stoicism, wears a pathetic aspect. But they went gallantly to work. Their slogan was a return to the old classics. They acknowledged the authority of Cicero and Virgil, but rebelled against the absolute authority in style that these lords of language had imposed upon the following generations, and strove to effect the freedom they had in mind by going back, so far as might be done with reason, to the style of the earlier Latin classics, of Ennius and Plautus, of old Cato and the Gracchi. They would talk of Lucilius, Naevius, Pacuvius, Accius, Terence, Claudius Quadrigarius, but never a word about Tacitus, Petronius, Martial, Pliny the Younger, or Statius; Seneca was only mentioned to be scornfully condemned as a corrupting influence, and Lucan was barely named. In these ancient writers they found a freshness, an energy, a naturalness, which they missed in the highly cultivated manner of the golden age. In such a mood, lovers of the Elizabethan past, Charles Lamb perhaps, might propose a return to Shakspere and Hooker. And this literary movement was not

confined to a small clique of men-of-letters, it was not mere intellectual foppery; there had always been a tradition of linguistic purity among the Roman aristocracy. Scipio and Caesar were purists. And there seems to have been a tradition at the Roman bar, in favor of antiquated words; at least, on occasions, advocates would employ them even though they were obsolete and obscure. The clever, cultivated Emperor Hadrian preferred Cato to Cicero, and Ennius to Virgil. The same movement affected writers of the provinces, such as Apuleius, and not only Latin literature but Greek literature as well. Such, then, was the intellectual atmosphere in which Marcus Aurelius was bred. He must, at times, have joined the group waiting in the vestibule of the imperial palace for Antoninus Pius to appear, and listened to Fronto, Favorinus, and their fellows, talk of their admirations.

Fronto's interest for us lies in his correspondence with Marcus Aurelius and other distinguished persons of the time. Of his orations nothing remains, of his literary compositions virtually nothing but a few brief essays and some fragments of eulogy; and these, except so far as they are exponents of the new style that he and his fellow craftsmen were trying to create, are hardly worth the reading. A great gulf separates their taste from ours. Fronto is the product of his epoch; it had its own likings for euphuistic refinements, archaic words, artful simplicity, and also, creating odd juxtapositions, it liked to introduce into the literary language words from the street. Our appreciations are different. But if modern scholars do not rate Fronto highly, his world did; and his reputation went reverberating on for hundreds of years, until the ancient world itself went to its setting in the night of Barbarian conquest. His praises are repeated again and again: "Fronto, of Roman eloquence, not a second [i.e. to Cicero] but coequal glory"; "to glorify my Emperor, my one hope lies in imitating Fronto"; "For a

model of eloquence take Plautus, for seriousness and weight take Cato, for bitter invective Gracchus, for eloquence Cicero, for pomp and circumstance take Fronto"; "Orator insignis," "Orator nobilissimus."

Oratory had always been held in high esteem among the Romans. Where there are no newspapers, the power of speech is a potent instrument of government; and under the Republic, whether in the Senate, in courts of law, or before assemblies of voters, a skillful orator was a man of consequence. In Shakspere's play of *Julius Caesar,* the effects wrought by the speeches of Brutus and of Mark Antony are reasonably true to Roman life. Under the Empire, also, a discourse before the Senate, or a harangue to the Praetorian Guard, might be a matter of considerable political importance; and oratory was always highly valued as a social accomplishment. In the conversations reported by Aulus Gellius, the speakers emphasize the trivial side of oratory, merely because they take the serious for granted. The great weight attached to the education of an orator is plain from Cicero's treatises and from Quintillian's *Institutes.* And from the earliest times, it was recognized that as oratory is the art of persuasion, the fundamental requisite for success is character. An orator must first of all be an upright and honorable man; he must first lay the corner stone of righteousness, and after that build up his superstructure of history, poetry, philosophy, and so forth. Cato's definition was accepted as an axiom, *Orator est vir bonus dicendi peritus,* an orator is a good man skilled in the art of speaking.

Fronto, as the most eminent orator of his time, was naturally marked out as the fittest person to instruct a future sovereign in this essential branch of royal learning, and accordingly he became Marcus's teacher of rhetoric. The nature of his teaching is set forth in their correspondence; and in reading the earlier letters that passed between them,

one must remember that the correspondents are master and pupil, that the letters are, in a measure, lessons and exercises in rhetoric, made so partly on purpose, and partly because the relation between the two gave that cast to the correspondence, and both chose to abide by it; and, no doubt, Fronto advised his pupil that it was a good practice to follow the rules of rhetoric in writing letters. Many passages, in fact, sound as if the correspondents were carrying on unfinished discussions and conversations of the lecture room. What seems to us forced, stilted, exaggerated, or fantastic, was accepted by the correspondents at its rhetorical value; even in their most affectionate letters, it pleased them both to keep to the style of a rhetorical essay. Occasionally there is an out-and-out laying down of principles and of their application, but generally the elements and fundamental propositions of oratory are assumed.

Critics, bred upon the English traditions of composure and self-restraint, who deem it a point of good manners to present a mask of indifference toward their dearest friends, refer with disapprobation to the fervid expressions of affection between Fronto and Marcus. J. W. Mackail, for instance, compares the enthusiastic phrases in which their mutual fondness clothes itself, to "the effusiveness of schoolgirls." This criticism, if I may venture to say so, disregards one of the signs of those times. Latin, as a spoken language, had already begun to break up and take on a new form that was destined ultimately to become the Italian language. Some of the adjectives that Fronto and Marcus Aurelius apply to one another are among the earliest tokens that the written speech was following the same course. Englishmen may confine themselves to "Dear Smith," and "Yours truly," but Italians have another convention, they begin their letters "Illustrissimo, Nobilissimo, Dilettissimo" and end with "Ossequi umilissimi," "Servitore devotissimo," and what not. The florid adjectives that the two friends use, disertis-

sime, doctissime, mihi carissime, dulcissime Magister optatissime, amice desideratissime (these are their Latin words), are nothing else than frank Italian terms of endearment, such as add a warmth to ordinary Italian correspondence, and justify themselves to those who believe, as Fronto did, that words should express, not only thought, but also emotion, with nice accuracy. Manners have their age of rococo, as well as of Doric simplicity, and the rococo is not without artificial charm of its own. Fronto's letters merely adopt the literary fashion of the times, they have (to quote an eighteenth century expression) a "correctly-elegant epistolary style." Aelius Aristides was quite as extravagant, and frigid as well. Favorinus wrote to Herodes Atticus, who had been a Roman consul and his ancestors consuls before him: "When shall I see you, and kiss both corners of your lips (περιλείξω το στόμα)?" And Herodes himself, famous as "the tongue of Athens," had these verses inscribed upon a statue erected on the Appian Way, in honor of his deceased wife:

TO REGILLA

Come hither to this temple ye daughters of Tiber,
  Strew incense on the shrine of Regilla;
She was sprung from the much-owning sons of Aeneas,
  Of the far-famed race of Anchises and Idalian Aphrodite.
At Marathon was she wed, and the goddesses of heaven
  Honor her, Demeter the new and Demeter the old.
For to them the sacred statue of this fair girdled lady is dedicate;
  But she inhabiteth the happy isles
Where Kronos reigns, among the heroines.
  Zeus on the Elysian breeze of Zephyrus
Sent the fair lady to the Ocean Sea, etc., etc.

As some of these verses refer to the Empress Faustina, there may be good reason to suppose that they were first submitted to her and approved. Fronto's offending lies in his inability to rise above the accepted standards of his generation.

CHAPTER V

THE STUDY OF RHETORIC

OF all his teachers Marcus was most intimate with Fronto, and though in later years he did not have the admiration for him that he entertained toward Maximus and Rusticus, perhaps because Fronto was averse to all philosophy, and particularly to Stoic philosophy, yet all his life long he felt a peculiar fondness for the enthusiastic, eloquent, kind friend, so much older than himself. Evidently Fronto was a loveable man with a warm heart, who attached people to him by transparent kindliness. Lucius Verus, who also became his pupil, was as devoted to him as Marcus himself; and Fronto's expressions of admiration for his friends reveal very plainly that affection and respect must have been mutual. One, he says, is remarkable for the elegance of his scholarly attainments; another has a delicate sense of words, is a good fellow and *no philosopher;* a third is a man of exceptional learning and oratorical gifts; a fourth is very brilliant in marshalling his phrases; a fifth, learned and eloquent; a sixth, "I like very much, because of his acquirements and scrupulously honorable character"; another is "worthy of any office"; and to one he writes, "When I remember that my beloved friend is safe and well, I become a less easy prey to grief, and the evil chances of life"; and to another, "There are people who although they have been friends for a long time, part all of a sudden, either because their characters are slight, or because of new found friends; but *we* are not men of that calibre."

I imagine, too, that Fronto was endowed with the gift

of instant sympathy, whether in joy or sorrow, and an instinctive impulse to declare that sympathy, together with a ready power of expression, in word, look, and gesture, such as is often the prerogative of southern people, and means much in serious matters, and, in times of light-hearted leisure, renders human intercourse very agreeable. And there is, perhaps, a further explanation of the particular affection that Marcus harbored toward him. The imperial household, in its appointments and ceremonies, was unostentatious, everything was ordered in accord with the sobriety and self-restraint of the Emperor's character and taste; nevertheless the Domus Tiberiana was the palace of the master of the world, and could not dispense with formal decorum and the conventional dignity of royalty. Marcus himself was the appointed heir, and willy-nilly was obliged to maintain a style of living uncongenial to his ideals of life. He enjoyed his uncle's society, but the times when he was able to enjoy it, at least during their residence in Rome, must have been few and short. The Emperor was occupied with affairs of State, and Marcus, on his part, had ceremonial obligations, priestly functions, official duties, in addition to his hours of study. Life must have contained much irksome routine. For diversions there were gladiatorial shows, races, the theatre; but Marcus, though he was often obliged to be a spectator, was averse, both by nature and by early training, to such exhibitions, and had no taste for feasting or carousing. His intellectual curiosities, his literary enthusiasms, needed companionship. In the seething time of adolescence, a young man craves sympathy outside of his immediate family. Antoninus was blessed with all the virtues, but it does not appear that either he, or his wife Faustina, had intellectual tastes; Domitia Lucilla was a sweet and loving mother, but maternal tenderness is not all that a brilliant son needs. And of his cousin Faustina the younger, neither during the period of their betrothal

nor after their marriage, is there any evidence that she had interests beyond her family affections. Marcus's other tutors were Stoics, disciplined men, unemotional, disillusioned perhaps, and would have repressed those ebullitions of affection and fancy which Fronto encouraged. Marcus was of a serious disposition, but youth, especially youth endowed with intelligence and imagination, and raised to a position where only self-restraint stands between itself and the gratification of every wish, naturally reaches out to a larger freedom, where it shall find ample scope for fancy, for self-expression, and for mere intellectual discursiveness. Fronto, therefore, came as a liberating spirit. He opened windows upon a different world; and, what meant even more than this, in his warm, impulsive African way, he lavished upon Marcus an outspoken affection and admiration that the Roman tutors did not approve of and sometimes austerely repressed. When Marcus was found weeping at the loss of a friend, his Stoic tutors rebuked him; the kind-hearted Antoninus bade them let him alone, saying, "neither philosophy nor imperial power can destroy the affections." And yet, Antoninus, if one may judge from his character, did not go further than freedom from interference, whereas Fronto lauded Marcus's capacities to the skies, his accomplishments, his taste, and rescued the diffident young man from the host of apprehensions that his future responsibilities cast like a great shadow about him. Fronto, too, was stuffed with a knowledge of literature and notions of literary values and glowed with enthusiasm for his art; and Fronto's zeal for Latin literature was not merely for Latin literature as such, but as a great achievement of the Latin race. He was an intense patriot himself, and when he wished to make high commendation of a friend he would call him "a great lover of his country (patriae amantissimus)." He was at one with the Emperor in piety toward the Roman past, in veneration for the established traditions of the

forefathers, and in the belief that faithfulness to that past and those traditions would still secure health and strength to the Empire; and he quickened in his royal pupil a lively admiration for the ancient heroes who had made the Roman name so proud a possession. As a natural corollary or accompaniment to this patriotism, Fronto embraced the fashionable cult for antiquity in literature, and taught a devout loyalty for the ancient authors and whatever else had issued out of the heroic days of the Republic. More than thirty years afterwards his imperial pupil still classed the old words and the old heroes together in his memory (M. A. IV, 33). And, above all, Fronto was truthful, pure-minded, honest and genuine, and, evidently, from the very beginning, conceived a deep and eager affection for the winning, wistful, young man.

Fronto was married; his house stood in what had once been the gardens of Maecenas, on the Esquiline Hill, near the old wall of Servius Tullius, a little to the southeast, perhaps, of where S. Maria Maggiore now stands. His wife's name was Grace, and they had one daughter, also named Grace; and all three were on terms of affectionate familiarity with Marcus and his mother. The part of the correspondence between Fronto and Marcus that I am about to quote, runs over the years from 139 to 143 or thereabouts, when Marcus is eighteen to twenty-two years old. The exact chronology is not important for our purposes. It seems likely that Fronto was living in Rome, and that Marcus usually wrote from somewhere in the country, Lorium or Lanuvium, perhaps, and, part of the time, from Naples or Baiae. Some letters, as will be seen, relate to the preceding letters, and some do not. Greek phrases I have rendered in French.

Fronto to Marcus

MY DEAR LORD CAESAR:

When I got home, your letter, which you had addressed to me at Rome, was given to me. It had been sent to Rome, and was brought from there today, and given to me a little while ago. In it you have refuted with many elegant arguments the trifling things that I wrote *On behalf of Sleep,* and so wittily, so subtly, so aptly, that if sleeplessness brings you so much acumen and grace, I shall certainly prefer to have you sleepless.

But, you say you wrote in the evening just before you were going to sleep; therefore it was sleep, approaching and bending over you, that enabled you to write this elegant epistle. For sleep, like the crocus, even at a distance, sheds its fragrance from afar and charms us a great way off. . . .

Your Latin quotations are interposed between the Greek verses with great skill in the alternation, just as in the Pyrrhic dance there is a running to and fro of different colors, some dancers in scarlet, others in golden-yellow, others still in shades of purple, who dance about, in and out, arm in arm.

Then you pass on admirably from Ulysses to Agamemnon. Then you give a sly dig at Ennius where you say that, if he had not waked from sleep, he never could have told his dream. Find, my dear Marcus Caesar, if you can, something more wittily said than that! No trick of legerdemain is more adroit; no trap, as Laevius says, more artful. But what I am asking you, is not to wake up; rather I am asking you to go on sleeping.

One other proverb, Behold a man with whom it is safe to throw dice in the dark! And am not I, who know how clever and honest you are, most fortunate to receive from you the great title of "Master"? How am I *your* Master?

Especially as the one thing I desire to teach you—how to sleep—I do not succeed in.

Follow your good pleasure; and may the gods preserve you for me both while you sleep and while you wake. Good-bye, my joy, good-bye.

FRONTO.

Marcus to Fronto

MY DEAR MASTER:

I shall have nothing to do all day. If you ever loved me, love me today and send me a good fertile subject. I beg, I beseech, *je t'en prie, je t'en supplie, je t'implore.* For in this theme about the Centumvirs, I have discovered nothing except *des phrases vibrantes pour terminer le discours.* Farewell, Best of Masters. The Lady, my Mother, sends you her kind regards. I have been wanting to write about something where it would be necessary to rant and rave. Be nice about it and send me a good ranting *sujet.*

MARCUS.

Fronto to Marcus

MY DEAR LORD:

I have got a theme for you; it is a serious subject. A consul of the Roman People, at the festival of Minerva, laid aside his official toga, put on gauntlets, and, right among the gladiators, in the presence of the Roman People, killed a lion. A demand for punishment has been lodged with the Censors. *Expose le sujet d'abord, puis il faut entrer dans tous les détails.* Farewell, my charming Lord. Please give my respects to my Lady, your Mother.

FRONTO.

Marcus to Fronto

DEAR FRONTO:

When did it happen? Was it at Rome? Aren't you speaking

of that affair under Domitian at Albano? I may say that it will be necessary to do a great deal of work on this subject, in order to make it seem credible, or rather to stir up any indignation at it. It seems to me *un sujet très peu vraisemblable*. . . . Please write me at once when it took place.

MARCUS.

Marcus to Fronto

MY DEAR MASTER:

I have written out my theme completely (send me another subject), but my secretary was not on hand to copy it out. Nevertheless, I have not written it to my liking; in the first place I was in a hurry, in the second your sickness took away some of my powers. But my apologies shall go tomorrow, when I shall send my theme. Good-bye, my Sweetest Master. The Lady, my Mother, sends her kind regards. . . .

MARCUS.

Fronto to Marcus

DEAR CAESAR:

Grace came home last night. And a second grace, because you have transposed those apothegms so admirably; indeed the one I received today is so nearly perfect that it could be put in a volume of Sallust, without any shortcoming or lack of harmony. When you are making such good progress, I become very happy, gay, healthy, and young.

I am going to ask something hard of you; but since I remember how much it benefited me, I cannot help exacting it of you. Transpose the same apothegm over and over again, two or three times at least, just as you have done with this little one. Go on and transpose the longer ones also, two or three times; be diligent and bold; for whatever you attack boldly you will, with your intelligence, do excellently. . . .

When, by the grace of the gods, you come back to Rome,

I shall ask you to do daily verses again. My obeisance, please, to my Lady, your Mother.

FRONTO.

Marcus to Fronto

MOST NOBLE CONSUL:

I am placed in that condition of fortune, in which, as Ennius says:

> The counsel of all men is hollow,
> Urging us always to pleasure.

Plautus, too, says admirably on this subject, in his *Colax:*

> Though they have pledged their honor, they deceive
> Him that believes them, sneaking sycophants,
> Who press about the king, and on their lips
> Is one thing, in their hearts another.

There was a time when this mischief concerned Kings only; but now the sons of Kings have the same kind of courtiers, who, as Naevius says:

> Listen obsequious, duck, and play the lackey.

Am I not right, dear Master, to be wroth, to put before myself *un seul but?* and am I not right to fix my thoughts on one man only, when I pick up my pen?

You ask me, in a most flattering way, for my verses; and I should have sent them at once, if I had had them with me. But my secretary (you know him, I mean Anicetus), when I was starting, did not pack any of my writings. He knew my failing and was afraid that if I got hold of them, I should do as I usually do, and throw them in the fire. But those verses ran no risk; for, as I will confess truly to my Master, I like them.

In this place, I study at night; for my day is spent at the theatre. I accomplish little, tired at night, and I get up in the morning half asleep. In spite of this, I have filled five books with *extracts from sixty volumes!* But when you read

sixty, remember that they include things by Novius, and farces, and Scipio's short speeches. I was afraid the number might frighten you. . . .

Good-bye, my very dear, my most affectionate, Friend; good-bye, most noble Consul, sweetest of Masters. . . .

MARCUS.

Fronto to Marcus

MY DEAR LORD:

You may think that I slept all last night, but most of the time I lay awake, wondering whether I am not too lax and too lenient toward your faults, on account of my exceeding affection for you, and whether you ought not to be farther advanced in rhetoric, and have a more eloquent way of expressing yourself, were it not that sloth and carelessness stultify your talents. While I was turning this over anxiously in my mind, I began to realize that you have progressed much beyond your years, more than was reasonable to hope for from the length of time you have studied the subject, and even more than I had expected, although I had set my hopes excessively high. . . .

Let us gird ourselves and make an effort. I will guarantee, go bail, give any pledge, that I shall quickly set you on the very pinnacle of eloquence. The gods will do it, they will bless us. Good-bye, my Lord, *espère, aie bon courage, fie-toi au temps et à l'expérience.* Please give my humble respects to my Lady, your Mother. In that passage on the discipline of the Persians, your expression *lay on load* is good.

FRONTO.

Marcus to Fronto

DEAR MASTER:

I have received two letters from you at once. In one of them you found fault with me and accused me of having written a passage carelessly; in the other you were watching over my exertions and making them easier by your com-

pliments. Nevertheless, I swear on my life, on my mother's, on yours, that your first letter gave me the greater pleasure. While I was reading I exclaimed again and again, How lucky I am! Somebody may ask, Are you lucky because you have a master to teach you how to *traiter un sujet,* with ingenuity, lucidity, brevity, and elegance? No, that is not the reason why I call myself lucky. Why is it, then? Because I learn from you to speak the truth. To speak the truth straight out is a hard matter both for gods and men. There is no oracle so truthful but it contains some doubt, some uncertainty, something intricate, by which an imprudent man is caught as in a snare. . . . So I must thank you because you teach me so well both to speak the truth and to listen to the truth. . . .

MARCUS.

When the time came for Marcus, as consul, to make his maiden speech in the Senate (140 A. D.), Fronto was more nervous than his pupil.

MY LORD:

If you have any affection for me sleep well these nights, so that you shall enter the Senate with a good color, and speak with a good vigorous voice.

FRONTO.

DEAR MASTER:

I shall never have enough affection for you; I will go to sleep.

MARCUS.

MY LORD:

Excuse me. Please strike out one word from your speech, and I beg that you will never say *diction* for *oration.* Good-bye, my Lord, my everlasting glory. Please give my respects to my Lady, your Mother.

FRONTO.

DEAR MASTER:

If you will remind me about that word tomorrow, I will give you my reasons.

MARCUS.

In the year 143, the Emperor appointed Fronto consul for the brief term of two months, according to the custom that obtained at this time, probably as a reward for his services as tutor to Marcus, for the same honor had been accorded a little earlier to Herodes Atticus. The office was in great measure honorary, and Fronto's chief duty was to deliver a panegyric upon the Emperor. The occasion was to be of great social importance; and in order to make the oration worthy both of the Emperor and of his own reputation, Fronto spared neither time nor pains. Before it was delivered, he sent certain passages to Marcus, perhaps with the idea of finding out whether the style and substance would be satisfactory to his imperial patron.

Fronto to Marcus

Rome, July, 143.

MY DEAR LORD CAESAR:

In your last letter you asked why I had not delivered my speech in the Senate. I shall deliver it on the ides of August. Perhaps you want to know why so late? Because I am never in a hurry, in any respect, to fulfill a ceremonial function. But also, as it is my duty to treat you without dissimulation or ambiguity, I will tell you what is the idea in the back of my mind. I have often in the Senate praised your grandfather, the Divine Hadrian, copiously, and gladly, too; there are many of those speeches, and they are in everybody's hands. My attitude toward Hadrian (be it said with the kind permission of your filial respect) was rather that of desire to have him well-disposed and gentle, as if he were Mars Gradivus or Father Jupiter, than of affection. Why so?

Because for affection one needs some assurance and familiarity; but I lacked assurance, and therefore, though I felt great reverence for him, I was not bold enough to entertain affection for him. But Antoninus I love and dote upon, as I love the sun, day, life, the soul, and I feel that he loves me. Unless I speak his praise in such a way that my eulogy shall not lie buried in the records of the Senate, but be in men's hands and eyes, then I even fail in gratitude to you. For, as the runaway slave is reported to have said, "I always ran like sixty for my master, but now to make my escape, I'll run like a hundred." So when I used to eulogize Hadrian, I was running for a master; but now I am running on my own account, for my own sake, I say, and I am putting all my mind into this oration. Therefore, according to my convenience, I shall proceed slowly, leisurely, comfortably.

If you are in a great hurry, find some diversion in the meanwhile; kiss your Father, hug him, and then eulogize him yourself. However, you may expect to hear something to your taste on the ides of August. Good-bye, Caesar, try to deserve such a father; and if you mean to write anything, write slowly.

FRONTO.

These letters are not in sequence; possibly I am quite wrong as to the episodes to which they relate; and it is uncertain just which of Fronto's letters called forth the following rhetorical answer from the prince.

Marcus to Fronto

Naples, (?) July, 143.

MY DEAR FRONTO, MOST ILLUSTRIOUS CONSUL:

I surrender; you have conquered. Beyond a doubt you have outdone in affection all the lovers that ever existed. Take the victor's wreath; and, besides, let the herald pro-

claim aloud before your judgment seat this victory of yours —*Marcus Cornelius Fronto consul a vaincu; il a remporté la couronne dans le combat des grandes amitiés.* And, though overcome, nevertheless I shall not withdraw nor forsake my delight. You then will love me more than any man ever loved another; and I, forsooth, who have less power of loving, nevertheless I shall outdo every other man in affection for you, I shall love you more than you love yourself. Now I shall enter the lists with Grace, but I fear that I cannot excel her. For, as Plautus says, a shower of love has not only saturated her clothes with its great drops, but has soaked down into the very marrow of her bones.

Do you realize what a letter you have written me? I will venture to say that she who bore and nursed me never wrote anything to me so delightful, so honey-sweet. Nor does this come from your eloquence, your gift of speech, for then not only my mother but all who breathe would yield (as they do) immediately; but your letter to me, though neither elaborate nor learned, gushes with so much kindliness, overflows with so much friendship, and shines with so much affection, that I cannot sufficiently express how it has lifted my soul on high for joy, how it has stirred me with a most fiery affection, and finally, as Naevius says, how it has filled my soul with love until death.

And your other letter, in which you explained why you were going to postpone to a late day your oration before the Senate in praise of my Sovereign, gave me so much pleasure that I could not restrain myself (do you think that I was indiscreet?) from reading it aloud to my Father. And I need not relate how much it pleased him, for you are well aware both of his kind disposition, and also of the great elegance of your letter. But, starting with it, we had a long conversation about you, much, oh, very much, longer than your conversation with your friend the quaestor about me. So I don't doubt that in the Forum at that very time your

ears burned for a long while. My Sovereign likes and approves your reason for adjourning your speech.

MARCUS.

Fronto to Marcus

MY DEAR LORD AND CAESAR:

I take it for granted, my Lord, that you devote a little time to writing prose; for although a rider exercises his horse's speed whether he goes at a gallop or at a trot, nevertheless the more useful gait should be the more frequently practised.

You see that I am not dealing with you as if I had in mind that you are but twenty-two years old. At that age I had hardly read any of the classics; but, by the grace of the gods and your own virtues, you have attained a proficiency in oratory that would suffice to establish the reputation of men of mature years. And, also (a difficult accomplishment), you have done equally well in all forms of writing, for the letters which you write so assiduously show me clearly enough what you can do in the less ceremonious letter-writing style, in Cicero's manner.

The verses that you have sent me I have sent back by Aufidius Victorinus. And I sent them back in this way. I carefully sewed the paper together with thread, and I sealed the thread so tight that not even that little mouse could get a glimpse in any way. For he has never shared any of your hexameters with me; he is so sly and cunning. In excuse, he says that you recite your hexameters on purpose very fast, and that therefore he can't commit them to memory. But he is paid tit for tat. He gets as good as he gave; he shan't hear a single line. Besides, I remember you have often admonished me not to show your verses to anyone.

Well, how do things go, my Lord? You are surely in good spirits, surely well, surely safe and sound in every respect.

Farewell, my delight, my safety, my mirth, my glory. Farewell, and, I beseech you, love me wholly both in jest and earnest.

I have written your mother a letter in Greek (such is my presumption), and I have enclosed it in my letter to you. Read it first, and if there are gross mistakes in it, will you, as you are fresher from Greek literature, correct them, and then hand it to your mother; for I don't want her to despise me as a yokel. Good-bye, my Lord, and give your Mother a kiss when you give her the letter, so that she shall be the more willing to read it.

CORNELIUS FRONTO, CONSUL.

Marcus to Fronto

Naples, August 15 (?), 143.

MY DEAR CONSUL AND MASTER:

If any of the ancient Greeks ever wrote like you, let scholars judge; for my part, if I may venture to say so, I have never found a passage in Cato that vituperates as well as you eulogize. If it were possible to eulogize our Sovereign as he deserves, certainly your eulogy of him would be adequate. *Mais cette tâche est encore à faire.* And yet it would be easier to imitate Phidias or Apelles, it would be easier to imitate Demosthenes himself, or Cato even, than your work, it is wrought with so much elaboration and finished excellence. I have never read anything in which there was such culture, such flavor of our old classics, such polish, such pure Latin. Oh, happy me, to be taught by such a master! *Quels arguments! Quel ordre!* What brilliancy! what wit! what graces! *Quel éclat!* Oh, in every line of it! May I die but you should have a sceptre put into your hands, a crown set on your forehead, and a judgment seat erected for you. Then a herald should summon us all. Why do I say *us*,—I mean all men of letters and orators. By the

authority of your sceptre you would bring them up one by one and discourse wisdom to them.

I write this to you in the greatest hurry, because, as I am sending you a most gracious letter from our Sovereign, what need is there of a longer letter from me, so, good-bye, honor of Roman oratory, pride of your friends, *homme impayable,* most delightful of men, most illustrious of consuls, sweetest of masters.

In future, please beware of such mendacious exaggeration about me, especially in the Senate. And yet how wonderful of you to have written that speech! O, that I might kiss your head at every heading. *Vous avez charmé tout le monde.* After reading your speech, it is of no use for me to struggle and labor, and strain every nerve. Fare you well always, sweetest Master.

MARCUS.

The letter from the Emperor contained this passage, the rest is lost:

By Hercules! you have done capitally to have found something new in such a familiar and well-worn subject. But, of course, even to wish to do what you can do so well, is a source of effectiveness. Nothing could be better than your ideas; nothing more urbane (and yet they keep their soundness) than your way of expressing them. Nor will I do you the wrong to defraud you of your well-earned praise, for fear of the impropriety of praising my own praises. So, you have made your formal acceptance, and, by a most deserving performance, which (the subject apart) is entitled to every honor. For the rest, there was little to do in order to let me know how you felt toward me, for I well know that what I say and do meets your most kind approval. Good-bye, Fronto, my dear friend.

ANTONINUS, IMPERATOR.

P.S. The tribute to my Faustina, which you introduced into your speech most gracefully, I thought even more true than it was eloquent. What you said was absolutely true. By the gods! I had rather live with her on the prison island of Gyara than on the Palatine without her.

CHAPTER VI

LETTERS BETWEEN FRIENDS

THE note-book of Marcus's meditations is sad and belongs to a bereaved old age; it is a book of antique hardihood and of religious desire, almost religious passion, thwarted by a physical philosophy; the histories that concern his reign say but little that is personal of him; the beggarly biographer, who goes under the name of Julius Capitolinus, spent his time, like a ragpicker, poking about in the refuse of history; so that these letters between the kind old master and the imperial pupil are almost the only documents that have any biographical value, and therefore it may not be out of place to introduce some more of them. A phrase here and there, an anecdote, a request, a casual reference, reports of reading, and expressions of affection, all contribute their several touches to a presentation of his character. At least they act as a gloss to explain and amplify the testimony given by the gracious sculptured effigy of him as a youth, a service which the marble statues of his serious, care-worn manhood return, by their commentary on the book of *Meditations*.

I will begin with a letter written in Greek, by Fronto to Marcus's mother, since she was a great factor in his education, and belongs to the category, as it seems to me, of those women who are entitled to share in the glory of their illustrious sons.

Fronto to Domitia Lucilla

August, 143.

My Lady:

Gladly, gladly, I assure you by the gods, indeed most

eagerly, have I sent my dear Grace to celebrate your birthday, and I should have gone myself, had it been possible; but my feet are in the stocks of office. For there are a few days of office left, and there is a great deal of public business to do. When that shall let me go, I am sure to run to you much more eagerly than runners who run a race; they are started after they have been but a moment or two on their marks, but this is already the second month that I am kept back from my race to you.

The thing that ought to have been done to celebrate this day was for women to assemble from everywhere; first, the women who love their husbands, and love their children, and are well-behaved; secondly, those who are true and quite without guile; and thirdly, the women who have charity, the affable, the courteous, and such as are free from pride, should all take part in the celebration. And many another troop of women should be there to share in your praise and partake of your virtue, for you possess all the virtues, and you are wise in all the accomplishments that become a woman, just as Athene possesses and is wise in the arts; but of other women, none are versed in more than one particular virtue and each is praised for that, just as praise is divided among the Muses, to each for her one art.

And if it had been my lot to have had charge of opening your door to guests worthy of the festival, I should have obeyed Homer and excluded those that falsely pretend to kind feelings, "who hide one thing in their hearts while they utter another," and are counterfeit all the way from laughter to tears. . . .

FRONTO.

These other letters I have picked out, regardless of chronology, for the information they contain about Marcus's doings and his way of life.

Marcus to Fronto

DEAR MASTER:

When my Father betook himself home from the vineyard, I as usual mounted my horse, and set out on the road. After I had gone a little way, right in the road there were a great many sheep all huddled together. It was a lonely spot. There were four dogs and two shepherds, and nothing else. Then one of the shepherds, when he saw several horsemen, cried to the other, "Look out for those fellows on horseback, they are often terrible robbers." When I heard that, I set spurs to my horse, and dashed in among the sheep. They took fright and scattered, some here, some there, bleating and scampering in every direction. One shepherd hurled his staff, which landed on the rider who was following me. We galloped away. The upshot was that the man who was afraid lest he lose his sheep, lost his staff.

Do you think I am romancing? No, it's a true story. There's more besides, and I should write the rest, but the servant comes to tell me that my bath is ready. Good-bye, sweetest Master, rarest and best of men; you are my ideal of pleasantness, of kindliness, and delightfulness.

MARCUS.

Marcus to Fronto

MY DEAR MASTER:

After I had got into the carriage and said good-bye to you, we did not have by any means a bad journey, except that we got a sprinkling of rain. But before we reached our country house, we went about a mile out of our road to visit Anagni, and saw what there was to see in this old town. It is a little bit of a place, but it contains many antiquities, and temples, and more things connected with worship than you can count. Not a corner but there is some sanctuary, or shrine, or temple. Besides, there are a quantity of books written on linen that have to do with religious

matters. Finally, on both sides of the town gate, as we went out, was this inscription: "Priest, put on the *sumentum.*" I asked one of the inhabitants what the word meant. He said that it was in the Hernician language, and meant a bit of skin taken from a sacrifice, which the priest puts on top of his cap when he enters the city. We learned many other things besides that we were glad to know. Nevertheless, when you are not with us, there is one thing we wish otherwise. That is our one great trouble.

And after you left us, where did you go? Did you go out on the Via Aurelia, or down to Campania? Write me, please; and say whether you have begun to get your grapes in, and whether you have taken a lot of books to your country house with you. And tell me also, do you miss me? That is a foolish question for me to ask, since you always tell me of your own accord. Now, if you miss me and if you love me, you will write often in order to cheer up my spirits. . . .

Good-bye, kindest, gentlest, most eloquent, and sweetest of Masters. When you see must fermenting in the jar, bear this in mind, that that is how my longing for you bubbles, and rises, and foams in my heart. Fare thee well, always.

MARCUS.

Marcus to Fronto

MY DEAREST MASTER:

My best greetings. All is well with us. Having made a good arrangement as to when I should have my meals, I studied from three o'clock at night to eight o'clock in the morning. From eight to nine, after putting on my sandals, I enjoyed myself very much walking up and down in front of my bedroom. Then I put on my boots and my military cloak, for that is the rule when we present ourselves, and I went to say good morning to the Emperor. Then we went hunting and did deeds of derring-do; wild boars were taken —so I have been told, for I had no opportunity to see any-

thing. Nevertheless, we did climb up a very steep hill; and in the afternoon we went home, and I betook myself to my books. I pulled off my boots, took off my clothes, and spent two hours on my bed. I read Cato's speech *On the property of Pulchra,* and another in which he brought charges against a tribune. "Ho! (you will say to your servant) go as fast as you can, and fetch me those speeches from Apollo's library." But you will send in vain, for those very books have come down after me. So you must do your best with the librarian of the Tiberian library; something will have to be paid in doing it, and when I come to town he can give me half.

After I had read those speeches, I wrote some poor stuff that deserves to be burnt up or thrown in the water. *Vraiment, j'ai écrit sans succès aujourd'hui,* compositions worthy of the huntsmen and vintagers who are making a frightful racket near my room shouting and singing. They are odious and tedious enough for a *lawyer.* What is that I'm saying? I was quite correct, for my Master is an *orator.*

I seem to have caught cold; I don't know whether it is because I walked about this morning in my sandals or because I wrote so badly. Anyhow, though I am generally a man of phlegmatic humors, yet today I find my nose running much more than usual. So I shall pour oil on my head (for I don't propose to put a single drop today into my lamp) and go to sleep; for I am dead tired with riding and sneezing. Take good care of yourself for my sake, dearest and sweetest of Masters, for without exaggeration I miss you more than I do the city of Rome.

MARCUS.

Marcus to Fronto

143.

DEAR MASTER, AND MOST NOBLE CONSUL:

I heard Polemon deliver an address the other day—*par-*

lons un tout petit peu de ces messieurs. Do you want to know what I thought of him? Here you have it. He seemed to me like a shrewd, energetic farmer, who has planted a large farm with grain and vines, and nothing else; from which, to be sure, he derives a handsome crop and a very rich return. But in his fields not a single Pompeian fig tree, no Arician vegetables, not a rose of Tarentum, no pleasant grove, no thick copse, no shady plane tree. Everything for utility rather than for pleasure; and one feels a greater obligation to be complimentary than to be pleased. Don't you think me bold enough in my opinion, and audacious enough in my criticism, when I pass judgment on a man of such a very great reputation? But when I bethink myself that I am writing to you, I believe I am not so bold as you would wish.

On such an occasion as this, doubt ebbs and flows like the sea! There you have an out and out hexameter. So, before I begin to write poetry, I will make an end to this letter. Good-bye, most wished for of men, my best friend, most noble Consul, dearest Master. Fare you well always, my sweetest spirit.

MARCUS.

Marcus to Fronto

MY SWEETEST MASTER:

My best greetings. All well here, I slept a little late on account of my tiny cold, which seems to have gone away. So, from five o'clock this morning to nine, I spent part of the time reading Cato's book on agriculture, and part of the time I wrote, not so badly, thank heaven, as I did yesterday. I went to say good morning to my Father, and then I paid attention to my throat. I sipped water and honey, letting it go part way down to the gullet and spitting it out; I prefer to express it in this way rather than to say *gargled,* although I think *gargled* is found in Novius and elsewhere. After I had applied this remedy to my throat,

I went off to my Father and stood beside him while he offered sacrifice. Then we went to lunch. What do you think I ate? A mere scrap of bread, while I watched the others devouring beans, onions, and sardines with roe. After that we set to work picking grapes, and got into a great perspiration, and sang songs, and as the poet says, "We only left some bunches hanging high, last survivors of the vintage." At twelve o'clock we went home; I did a little work, but not with any good result. Then I had a long chat with my dear mother while she was sitting on the couch. This was what I said, "What do you think my dear Fronto is doing now?" And she answered, "And what do you think dear Grace is doing?" Then I went on, "And what is our little lady-sparrow, dear little Grace, doing?" And while we were talking about that and discussing as to which of us was fonder of one or the other of you, the gong sounded, which is the way of announcing that my Father has gone to take his bath. So we had dinner after our bath in the room with the oil-press; I don't mean that we had our bath in the room with the oil-press, but, after our bath, we had dinner there. And we had a good time listening to the country folks jollying one another. I have now got back, and before I turn over on my side to snore, I reel off my task and give an account of my day to my dearest Master. And if it were possible for me to long for him more than I do, I would gladly be obliged to pine away still more. Take good care of yourself for my sake, wherever you are, my honey-sweet, dear, dear, delightful Fronto. What are your feelings for me? I love you though you are far away.

MARCUS.

Marcus to Fronto

143.

MY DEAR CONSUL AND MASTER:

Since I last wrote to you nothing has happened worth the

labor of writing it, or that would be of any use if known. For our days go by *l'un comme l'autre.* The same show, the same boredom, and the same desire for you. But why do I say the same? For in truth every day it is born anew and grows in intensity. And the words that Laberius says about love,

> "Your love grows fast as the leek and also as firm as the palm tree,"

I apply to my longing for you. I want to write a great deal more to you but nothing presents itself.

Oh, I have thought of something. I have been listening to those famous panegyrists, Greeks of course, but wonderful creatures; so that, though I am as far from any knowledge of Greek literature as my birthplace on the Caelian Hill is from Greece, nevertheless, I hope, in comparison with them, to be able to rival Theopompus, for I hear that he is the most eloquent of the Greeks. So these men, of "an impervious ignorance" as Caecilius says, have been pushing me, who am little better than a lout, into writing Greek.

The climate of Naples is very pleasant, but frightfully variable. Within the twenty-fourth part of an hour it gets too cold, or too hot, or very rough. Sometimes at the middle of the night it is pleasantly warm, as at Laurentum, then, at cock-crow, it turns as frigid as at Lanuvium; at other times, the first of the night, the dawn and early morning until the sun is up, it is as cold every bit as Algidus. After that, in the morning it is sunny, like Tusculum, then at midday we have all the heat of Pozzuoli. And when the sun has gone down to his ocean bath, then at last the temperature is gentle, the kind of air we have at Tivoli, and during the evening and the first sleep of night it keeps on in the same way, until, to quote Cato, "the dead of night goes headlong."—But why do I, after saying I should write but little, pile up this worthless stuff? So, good-bye, kindest

Master, most noble Consul, and miss me as much as you love me.

MARCUS.

Marcus to Fronto

GOOD MORROW, SWEET MASTER:

The post is at last about to start, and I at last can send you what I have done in these three days. I say nothing, I am so out of breath with dictating near thirty letters. And I have not yet told my Father about what you thought concerning the last letters. But when we get to town, please the gods, remind me to tell you something about them. But your thoughts, and mine too, are high up in the air, so that you will not remind me, and I shall not tell you; although it is a matter that needs to be thought about. Good-bye, my —what shall I say? nothing that I say will be enough— good-bye, my longing, my light, my joy.

MARCUS.

Marcus to Fronto

BEST OF MASTERS:

How are you? I know that on a birthday, it is the custom for friends to make good wishes for the man born on that day; nevertheless, because I love you as much as I love myself, on this day, though it is *your* birthday, I make prayers for *myself*. Therefore I beseech all the gods who make their power a present help to men, anywhere, who in dreams, in secret worship, in healing art or oracles, bestow their mighty aid—each separate god in vows I here invoke, and, according to the nature of each several vow, I transport myself to whatever spot the god who has the particular matter in his charge may hear most easily. Therefore, first of all, I climb the citadel of Pergamum and make my prayer to Aesculapius, that he keep whole my Master's health and guard it with might and main. From thence I hie to Athens

and on bended knee supplicate Minerva, beseeching her, if ever I am to learn aught about literature, that it shall (rather than from anywhere else) transmigrate from Fronto's lips into my mind. Now I return to Rome, and with my prayers implore the gods who watch over travellers by land and sea, that you may accompany me wherever I go, and that I may not be tormented so frequently and so fiercely by your absence. Finally I beg all the gods who guard all nations, I beg the sacred grove itself which rustles on the Capitoline Hill, to grant me this boon, that I with you may celebrate this day on which you were born for my sake, and that you may be both well and merry.

Farewell, my sweetest, dearest, Master. Please, please, take good care of yourself, so that when I come I may see you. My Lady Mother sends her kind regards.

MARCUS.

Fronto to Marcus

MY DEAR LORD:

All things are well with me when you offer prayers for me; for there is no one who deserves more than you to receive from the gods what he asks for; and besides, when I make supplication for you, no one deserves more than you to receive what is asked for you.

Good-bye, my sweetest Lord. Make my reverence, please, to my Lady.

FRONTO.

It is hard not to be overcritical with respect to compositions that lack the qualities by which modern collections of letters have become famous and taken their place in literature. We are bred upon too high a standard. We look for the wit, the delicacy, the rare gift of simplicity, or the simplicity of rare art, such as make William Cowper's letters delightful; or the banter, the light satire, the practised

skill of the ready *raconteur,* possessed by Horace Walpole; or the whimsical grace of Charles Lamb; or the spontaneous eloquence of the queen of letter-writers, Madame de Sévigné. Readers of the classics look for the various merits they find in Cicero or Pliny. The letters of Marcus Aurelius possess none of these qualities. They are almost all a little forced, and they all savor a little of lessons in rhetoric; and yet these deficiencies merely show that he was not a born letter-writer. Nature is as wayward in bestowing the gift of letter-writing as in bestowing the gift of poetry. We expect too much. The letters do reveal his honesty, his affectionate heart, and also his natural reserve. I take it that the main lack in them is of satire, of clever conceits, of a wayward fancy, that is, of condiment, of such animation as a *soupçon* of onion is said to bestow on a salad, and that the lack is due to a complete absence of self-love. A little egotism is necessary in a good letter-writer. A Greek critic, of the next generation to Marcus, bred upon literature, and come of a family distinguished for its intellectual accomplishments, a painstaking student and historian of the celebrated rhetoricians and sophists of that time, and therefore well qualified to speak for the educated taste of the day, rates Marcus's letters very highly. I speak of Philostratus the Athenian, who is known to lovers of English poetry because Ben Jonson took sentences here and there from the little poems in prose that Philostratus calls love-letters, and put them into English rhymes in the song:

> Drink to me only with thine eyes,
> And I will pledge with mine.

Philostratus says: "In respect to epistolary style, of philosophers, Apollonius of Tyana and Dio (Chrysostom) enjoyed, I think, the reputation for greatest excellence; of military men, Brutus, or whomever Brutus employed to write his letters; of Emperors, the divinely noble (θεσπέσιος)

Marcus (those which he wrote himself), for in addition to his nice choice of words, the firmness of his character is stamped upon his writing; of rhetoricians, Herodes Atticus, although he affects the Attic manner too much, and is too exuberant, and so falls short of the style that suits a letter." And to this praise of Marcus, I may add the comment that in spite of his working over his letters laboriously, for some of them at least appear to have been most conscientious efforts in rhetoric, he set no store by them. He wrote from an affectionate heart, with no thought of being read, except by his old teacher.

CHAPTER VII

EARLY MANHOOD

RHETORIC seems to have been Marcus's principal study during his early years from eighteen to twenty-five, but he followed the curriculum usual for young Romans of the patrician order, and devoted a good deal of time to Greek. In the *Meditations* references occur to Homer, Euripides, Aristophanes, and Plato, and, in the correspondence between him and Fronto, to Xenophon, Thucydides, Demosthenes, and to Attic comedy, New and Old. Probably he read many authors besides these. Greek was the language of philosophy, of Epictetus as well as of Epicurus, Zeno, and Plato, and various allusions show that Marcus read widely in Greek philosophy. Moreover, the records of his later life say that he attended lectures at Athens and Smyrna, and listened not only to Greek sophists, but also to Greek advocates in the argument of causes; it therefore seems likely that he spoke the language readily. The Empire recognized the two languages, and it was incumbent upon a conscientious Emperor to be master of both. He learned Greek from his tutors at home.

One cannot but regret, for his sake, that he did not enjoy the careless freedom of university life, such as he might have had at Athens, far from both official and domestic responsibilities; that he did not learn in his youth the lessons of beauty as well as of righteousness; that he did not wander along the beach washed by the waters of Salamis, stroll beside the gray-green olive trees that clothe the plains and slopes around the city with a grace worthy of Pallas Athene, or climb the Acropolis and sit beneath the marbles

of the Parthenon, where sunlight and shadow, more than elsewhere, display their rival beauties, to muse upon the riches of Greek glory that had made Athens their treasure house. One would like to think of him, as we do of Cicero, sauntering with other young men through the Ceramicus, and out by the Dipylon gate to see the haunts of the great Athenian philosophers. He might well have been the guest of Herodes Atticus in his hospitable villa by the foothills of Pentelicus, have paced up and down the pleasant shady walks of his gardens, and, undisturbed by such concert as the birds and fountains kept, have listened to the eloquent praises of his host upon the beauty of Athens. The English poet, equalled in renown as well as in fate to blind Maeonides, has described the scene:

> Behold
> Where on the Aegean shore a city stands,
> Built nobly, pure the air and light the soil,
> Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts
> And eloquence, native to famous wits
> Or hospitable, in her sweet recess,
> City or suburban, studious walks and shades;
> See there the olive grove of Academe,
> Plato's retirement, where the Attic bird
> Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long;
> There flowery hill Hymettus, with the sound
> Of bees' industrious murmur, oft invites
> To studious musing; there Ilissus rolls
> His whispering stream; within the walls then view
> The schools of ancient sages . . . .

Marcus might well have been a member of that group of young Roman students, of which Aulus Gellius was one, who used to celebrate their native feast of the *Saturnalia* within sight of the Parthenon. They enjoyed, as Gellius says, mirth and gaiety within the bounds of decorum, and found their greatest pleasure, like the young rhetoricians that they were, in literary conversation. The host of the evening (after the example of Favorinus) would propound

questions on various literary topics, such as a line from an old poet, a point of ancient history, a philosophical paradox, a sophistry, or some rare word or matter of grammar. The prize for the best answer was a book and a laurel wreath; or, if nobody could answer the question, then book and wreath were dedicated to Saturn, the god of the feast. These young men had the same tastes, the same enthusiasm for letters, for style, that Marcus shows in his correspondence with Fronto. Perhaps he thought of all these intellectual pleasures that he might have had, and regretted their loss, when in later years he visited Athens and endeavored to pour fresh life into her degenerate schools by the endowment of chairs of learning. But Marcus was a prince, bound in golden fetters, to quote his pedagogue, *ego Romae hereo compedibus aureis vinctus*. He stayed in Rome, and studied under Herodes Atticus.

Herodes did not touch Marcus's heart, at least he is not mentioned in the note-book. He was a man of passionate temperament; when a dearly beloved friend, a member of his household, died, Herodes continued to have his place at table set as usual, and the carriage was ordered as usual to come and take him to drive. Herodes also made many enemies and was constantly engaged in quarrels and lawsuits; and it happened that Fronto, as a leader of the bar, at the very beginning of his acquaintance with Marcus, was retained to conduct a suit against him. This he prepared to do with great spirit. Marcus got wind of it, and in order to make peace between them wrote to Fronto (quite differently from his custom when practising an essay in rhetoric) with simplicity, good sense, as well as tact, and not without a tone of authority.

My dear Fronto:

I remember you have often said to me, that you were looking for a chance to do something that would give me

great pleasure. That time has come. Now you can increase my affection for you, supposing that it is capable of increase.

Your case is coming on, at which I expect those present will not only listen to your speech with kindly interest, but will also, and with malign interest, give close attention to any expressions of anger. And I can't think of anybody else who will have the courage to give you good advice in this affair. For those who are not your friends will prefer to see you transgress the proprieties; and those who are your real friends will be afraid you may think them too inclined to your adversary, if they should persuade you to leave unsaid what would naturally make a part of your prosecution. And besides, if you have worked up some carefully chosen passages for the occasion, they can't bear to make you hold your tongue and mar the speech. So perhaps you will think me a presumptuous counsellor, or an audacious young fellow, or too kindly disposed toward your adversary; but for none of these reasons shall I hold back from giving you the advice that I think right and proper. But why do I say "advice"? for I am demanding this of you, and I demand it with insistence; and if I get my way, I promise you on my part that I shall hold myself under a like obligation to you.

You may say, "How's this, if he attacks me, am I not to pay him back with as good as I get?" But, you will get greater honor from this very thing, that even though you are attacked you say nothing in reply. It is true that if he should begin, whatever you might answer back would be excusable; but I have made a demand upon him not to begin, and I believe that I have got my way there. For I love you both, and each for his deserts. I remember, too, that he was brought up in the house of my mother's father, Publius Calvisius, and, on the other hand, that I have studied with you; and therefore I have greatly at heart that

this horrid affair should be conducted with the utmost propriety. I trust that you will think well of my advice, for you will certainly approve of my intention. I had rather speak out to the detriment of discretion than hold my tongue to the detriment of the obligations of friendship.

Good-bye, my very dear Friend,

MARCUS.

Fronto wrote a most polite answer. He begged Marcus to take back the words "presumptuous counsellor and audacious young fellow," said that he had no idea that Herodes was a friend of Marcus or he would never have spoken ill of him, and asked for more specific advice as to the conduct of the case, for not only he but other lawyers had been retained in it. Marcus answered:

MY DEAREST FRONTO:

My best greetings to you. I thank you, and I am very grateful that you not only have not rejected my advice, but have even given it your approval. And as to the matter that you consult me about in your most kind letter, my opinion is this: Everything that is strictly pertinent to the side of the case that you uphold, of course, should be set forth; but whatever is merely pertinent to your own feelings, no matter how justified they are, no matter what your provocation, should be passed over in silence. . . . One thing I have much at heart,—that you should not say anything (not necessary to the case) unworthy of your character and which might appear objectionable to your audience.

Good-bye, my very dear, delightful, Fronto.

MARCUS.

There is no further information concerning this lawsuit; but it is known that Fronto and Herodes became good friends and remained so all their lives.

It may be pertinent to quote here from another letter written by Fronto, which speaks of the young prince's power of making his own friends friends to one another, and warns him of the main obstacle in the way, the ever present enemy to friendship among courtiers, jealousy. Fronto begins with a fanciful description of Orpheus, how his music compelled the lion and the lamb to live together, and so forth:

"If there ever lived a man of so many talents that he was able to unite his friends and followers in mutual amity, you will do it far more easily, for Nature anticipated education in fitting you for all the virtues. Before you were old enough to undergo any instruction, you were already absolutely perfect in all good conduct; before you were fourteen, you were 'a good man'; before you put on the *toga virilis* you were 'skilled in the art of speaking.' But verily, of all your virtues this is the most admirable, that you unite all your friends in mutual good will; I will boldly assert that this is a much more difficult job than to tame lions with a lute. You will do this the more easily if you set yourself to pull up, and root out, just one vice. Do not let your friends be envious or jealous of you or of one another, or think that what you may do for one, or confer upon one, is a loss or taking from another. Jealousy among men is a most destructive, pernicious evil, equally harmful for those who cherish it and those who are the objects of it. If you manage to keep it far from your doors, you will enjoy kind and harmonious friends, as you do now; but should it by any means get abroad among them, it will cost great pains and labor to crush it down.

"But, please, let us talk of something pleasanter. I love Julian (for he is the original cause of this letter); I love all who are fond of you; I love the gods who protect you; I love life because of you; I love exchanging letters with you. And your friends and I revel in your affection."

Somewhere in this period, for historians disagree, Marcus married his cousin Faustina, daughter of Antoninus. Some say that it was in 145, and for various reasons that seems a likely date. The marriage was not a love match, it was a *mariage de convenance,* determined by reasons of state, and, according to the chroniclers, accepted by Marcus with philosophic deliberation. But there can be little doubt that it was a happy marriage; and I had better say at once that the infamous stories circulated about Faustina are wholly false. The original betrothal of Faustina to young Lucius Verus, and that of Marcus to Verus's sister, had been set aside, apparently with the consent of all concerned. Lucius Verus ultimately married Marcus's daughter. Marcus and Faustina had thirteen children in all; but only five lived to survive their father. The mortality among children at that time was very great. Poor Fronto, for instance, lost five out of six. There was gross ignorance of hygiene and diet, and Roman physicians, at least so the famous Galen of Pergamum thought, were very incompetent.

The loss of his children was a great grief to Marcus, and his very endeavors at concealment serve but to show how bitter that grief was. In his note-book he records his debt to the philosopher Apollonius who taught him to remain "the same," unaffected by the loss of a child (M. A. I, 8). And, according to the testimony, grief had little or no power to disturb the outward tranquillity of his face and bearing; but that his heart remained unaffected and tranquil as before, is contradicted by his need of repeating to himself the stern Stoic reflections by which those haughty philosophers hoped to overcome all human weakness. On one page he writes down: "One man prays, 'Oh, how can I save my little boy?' but do thou pray, 'How may I be freed from the fear of losing him?'" (M. A. IX, 40.) On another page: "The healthy eye should look at all things visible; it should not say, 'I want to look at green things,' for that is the desire

of a sick eye. . . . So should the healthy heart be ready to accept everything that befalls. The heart that says, 'O let my children be safe,' is like the eye that asks for green sights." (M. A. X, 35.) And again: "Though I and both my sons have been neglected by the gods, there is a reason for it." (M. A. VII, 41, quoting Euripides.) And he gives thanks to his tutor Catulus, who taught him how to love his children wisely or *truly according to right reason* (for that I take to be the meaning of ἀληθινῶς). (M. A. I, 13.) But in spite of keeping his courage up by these exhortations, and of his habitual success in controlling the outward manifestations of grief and presenting a calm face to the world, it is recorded that once, after he had lost a child, as it seems in the plague, when an advocate said, in the course of an argument, "Blessed are they who died in the plague," he was so shaken that he shed tears.

All the evidence agrees that he had a very tender heart and deep affections; he loved his children and his mother, and there is, I think, every reason to believe that he truly loved his wife.

Many of the letters between him and Fronto contain tender inquiries concerning one another's families, and one another's health, and bear ample witness to the affectionate dispositions of both the friends. Such of these letters as I shall quote were written during Marcus's early married life, and some before he was married.

Fronto to Marcus

[Rome, August, 148.]

My dear Lord:

I have sent my wife Grace to celebrate your mother's birthday and I bade her stay there till I came. The very minute I shall have taken the oath of laying down my consulship, I shall get into a carriage and fly to you. Meantime I have promised Grace on my honor that she should be in

no danger of starving; for your mother will share with her liege woman the little delicacies that you have sent to her. Nor is Grace possessed of a great appetite, such as (it is said) wives of lawyers have. She would live in great happiness on nothing but your mother's kisses. But what is going to become of me? There is not a single kiss left for me in Rome. My whole fortune, and all my delight, is at Naples.

FRONTO.

Fronto to Marcus

MY DEAR LORD:

I love you ten times as much. I have seen your daughter. It seemed to me as if I were looking simultaneously at you and Faustina, together, children again; there was such a happy mixture of both your faces! I love you ten times as much. Farewell, my Sweetest Lord. My respects, please, to my Lady.

FRONTO.

Marcus to Fronto

DEAR FRONTO:

We, too, love your daughter Grace better because she looks like you. So we easily understand that the likeness of our little girl to us should win for her your affection; and of course it is a great pleasure to me that you have seen her. Good-bye, Best of Masters.

MARCUS.

Marcus to Fronto

DEAR FRONTO:

By the will of Heaven we seem to have a hope of recovery. The diarrhoea has stopped and the feverishness has abated; nevertheless there is extreme emaciation, and slight coughing holds on. Of course you know I am writing about our

dear little Faustina, about whom we have been greatly concerned.

Dear Master, let me know if your health conforms to my wishes for it.

MARCUS.

Fronto to Marcus

DEAREST CAESAR:

By the Gods! I was frightened when I read the beginning of your letter. For it was so expressed that I imagined you spoke of danger to your own health. Afterwards, of course, you made it plain that the danger which at the beginning of your letter I had thought yours, concerned your daughter Faustina. My fears were completely shifted, and not only shifted, but for some reason or other, somewhat relieved. You may ask: "Did you think danger to my daughter is of less consequence than danger to me? Did you really think so, although you profess that Faustina affects you like a lovely morning, a holiday, a hope near at hand, a granted prayer, a perfect delight, a noble and enduring fame?"

Well, I know what my emotions were as I read your letter, but why I felt so, I don't know; I repeat, I don't know why I was more upset by a danger to you than to your daughter, unless, perhaps, that the misfortune you hear of first, seems to be the greater, even if it really be no worse. What, by analysis, is the reason of this, you will understand better than I, for you know more about human nature and the human feelings, and you have studied more about them and to better purpose than I have; . . . nevertheless, I think I have found a simile to explain why my fears seemed lighter when they were shifted. It is like the relief that comes to a man who is carrying a heavy burden on one shoulder, when he transfers the burden from the right shoulder to the left; for, although the weight is not lessened at all, nevertheless, the shifting seems to make it lighter.

Now, since the last part of your letter, in which you tell me that Faustina is a little better, has dispelled all my fear and anxiety, it does not seem to me an inappropriate time to speak somewhat at length and freely of my affection for you. For men who have been freed from great danger and alarm are generally allowed to indulge themselves and be a little foolish. I realize from indications, and not only of a weighty nature but also very often of a frivolous nature, how much I love you; I will tell you what the frivolous occasions are like.

Whenever, as the poet says, "I am bound in the chains of sweet and gentle sleep," and see you in my dreams, there is never a time that I do not kiss and hug you, and (according to the character of the dream) either I weep profusely or I exult for joy and delight. This last instance, derived from Ennius's *Annals,* shall be the poetical, and certainly the drowsy, proof of my love for you. Here is another, that has a flavor of quarrels and scolding. Sometimes, in the company of a very few intimate friends, when you weren't there, I have railed at you in good set terms, because (this was some time ago) you would go into a gathering of men much more distant and grave in manner than was polite, or because you used to read books at the theatre, or at table in the presence of guests. (In those days I used to go to the theatre and dine out.) So I have often called you an unsociable fellow who did not do things as he ought, and sometimes (when I was much put out) I have even said that you were perfectly horrid. But if any other man were to depreciate you in my hearing in that abusive way, I would not listen with a calm spirit. As you see, it was much easier for me to speak ill of you myself than to allow other men to do so; just as I had rather slap my daughter Grace than see her slapped by anybody else.

I will give you a third instance of these frivolous occasions. You know that on all the money-dealers' tables, in

every booth, tavern, sheltered vestibule, window, all over, everywhere, your pictures are publicly displayed, many of them badly painted, or statuettes very rudely modelled or carved; well, your picture, however unlike you, never catches my eye when I am out but that it purses my lips into a kiss and plunges me into a reverie.

Now to have done with frivolity and go back to serious matters, your letter showed me most forcibly how dearly I love you, seeing that I was more disturbed by your danger than by your daughter's; and seeing, besides, how I desire that you shall outlive me, as I desire that your daughter shall outlive you, for so it ought to be. But be very careful not to turn informer and tell on me to your daughter. Just as if I really loved you more than her! For there is a risk lest your daughter be indignant at this (like the serious, old-fashioned lady that she is) and when I ask leave to kiss her hands or feet, draw them back in displeasure, or hold them out most reluctantly; by heavens! I had rather kiss her sweet little hands and her plump little feet than your royal neck, or your honest, smiling lips.

FRONTO.

Marcus to Fronto

MY DEAR MASTER:

I hope that you will have a delightful time at your grape-picking, and that you will be in the best of health. The news of my little Lady-girl to the effect that by the grace of heaven she is better, is a great relief to me. Good-bye, my most agreeable Master.

MARCUS.

Fronto to Marcus

MY DEAR LORD:

After you were gone, I was taken with a pain in the knee, to be sure not so bad but that I was able to hobble about

on foot and go in a carriage. Last night the pain came on very violent, but nevertheless if I lie still I can bear it well enough, unless it should become worse.

I hear that the Princess your wife is not well. I pray the gods to take care of her. Good-bye, my sweetest Lord. Please give my respects to my Lady, your Mother.

FRONTO.

Fronto to Marcus

MY DEAR LORD:

Victorinus tells me just now that your Lady has more fever than yesterday. Grace said that everything was going better. I have not been to see you, because I am laid up with a bad cold. Nevertheless, I shall go to the palace tomorrow morning, and when there I shall pay my respects to my Lady, if it be convenient.

FRONTO.

Marcus to Fronto

DEAR MASTER:

Faustina had fever again today; . . . But, by the gods' grace, she herself puts my mind more at ease, because she conforms so obediently to what we want. You would have come if you could, I am sure. And, dear Master, I am delighted that you can come now and have promised to.

Good-bye, most pleasant of Masters,

MARCUS.

Fronto to Marcus

MY DEAR LORD:

I am getting in the grapes in my own garden. I am pretty well, except that I can hardly stand up on account of pain in the toes of my left foot. I pray the gods every morning for Faustina; and I know that in so doing I am praying for

your health. Good-bye, my very sweet Lord. Please give my respects to your Lady.

FRONTO.

Marcus to Fronto

MY DEAR MASTER:

I learn that you have a pain in the groin; and when I remember how much you usually suffer from that affliction, I feel the greatest anxiety. But it cheers me to hope that in the time it has taken the messenger to bring the news, the force of the pain may have yielded to compresses and remedies.

We are still experiencing summer heat, but since we really can say that our little ones are getting on well, we feel that we are enjoying a most comfortable temperature, real spring weather. Good-bye, my excellent Master.

MARCUS.

Fronto to Marcus

MY DEAR LORD:

Happy New Year! And I pray that everything that you have a right to wish for may go well with you, with our Lord your Father, with your Mother, your Wife, your little girl, and all others whom you deservedly love. I have stayed away, as my body is frail, for fear of the pushing crowd. If the gods please, the day after tomorrow I shall see you pronounce the vows. Good-bye, my very sweet Lord. Please give my respects to your Lady.

FRONTO.

Marcus to Fronto

DEAR MASTER:

And may the year begin well for you. May the gods bring all your good wishes on your own head, and that will be a fulfillment for us. And may you continue to pray for your

friends, and to wish well for everybody else. The prayers you offered for me came, I know, from your heart. And in bewaring of the crowd, you considered not only yourself but also my anxiety. The day after tomorrow will be less noisy, please the gods. Your Grace did her duty; but I don't know whether she paid her respects to her Ladyship. Good-bye, my very sweet Master. My Mother asks to be remembered to you.

MARCUS.

Fronto to Marcus

MY DEAR LORD:

All the prayers you have said for me depend on your well-being. I have health, strength, happiness, and prosperity, while you are so well in body, soul, and public esteem, so dear to your Father, so sweet to your Mother, so pure and devoted (*tam sanctus*) to your wife, so good and kind to your brother. It is this that, in spite of my poor health, makes me wish to live. Without you, enough, and more than enough, of age, and toil, and law, and fame; and, in truth, of sorrows and ailments, enough and more than enough.

According to your orders I bestowed the kiss upon my daughter; she never seemed to me so sweet to kiss, nor did I ever kiss her so sweetly.

Good-bye, and give a kiss for me to my little mistress.

FRONTO.

Marcus to Fronto

DEAR MASTER:

May you celebrate this birthday in good health, and those hereafter in strength and happiness with all your wishes fulfilled. This birthday prayer of mine becomes more and more devout, as I gain greater power for loving and the period of our very delightful intimacy lengthens out. Good-bye, most pleasant of Masters. My Mother wishes to be

remembered to you; and please give my kind regards to Grace.

MARCUS.

Fronto to Marcus

MY LORD:

That you shall celebrate your children's birthdays for many, many years, with everything going well, attended by the approval of your parents, the affection of the people and the love of your friends, worthy of your fortune, your birth, and your place,—for this I would give all my life, not only the scanty period that still remains before me, but also the past that I have lived, if in any way I could get back the whole, and spend it all for the good of your children and you, in order to repay what I owe.

If I did not find it difficult to walk, today is the day that I should very much like to embrace you; but I must yield the point to my feet, for they cannot travel. I am hesitating about taking the waters. If I make a definite plan, I will let you know. Good-bye, my sweetest Lord. Give your Faustina messages from me, and my congratulations; and please kiss your little mistresses in my name, but, in the way I always do, on the soles of their feet and their hands. Please give my respects to my Lady.

FRONTO.

It is difficult to reconstruct in the mind's eye this Roman past. The horrible vices of a Nero or a Domitian, on which Suetonius gloats with so much satisfaction, and the scarcely less terrible wickedness of many Emperors between the time of Marcus Aurelius and the reigns of Constantine and Theodosius, or whenever it was that the *Scriptores Historiae Augustae* compiled their biographical notices, have raised in our minds a general conception of wickedness, vice, and grossness that hangs like a thick cloud over the Domus

Tiberiana, and if we succeed in brushing this cloud aside, there is little left but a few stiff figures ambulating about in vacancy, no light, no shade, no color, no atmosphere, no perspective. It is this historical vacancy that gives especial value to this correspondence, and confers upon these random revelations of business dutifully done, of simple recreation, of family affections, of anxiety over sick children, and of sympathy with the aches and pains of an aged body, an importance that similar letters could not have in other periods of history. What they do not give, except by rare touches, is the consciousness that the younger letter-writer is the heir apparent to unlimited power, that his wife is the daughter of the reigning monarch, and that those little dimpled baby hands that hold their father's heart might one day be kissed by subject kings. The shadows of court life barely fall across the page for a moment and then are gone entirely; there is no word of wars or military ambitions; no mention of intrigues, cabals, mistresses, or imperial favorites; nothing to indicate, beyond the fervid expressions of devoted friendship, which are quite as fervid from the prince as from the advocate, that this young, beloved, and loving, correspondent was other than a private gentleman, living on the Palatine Hill, hard by the spot where Cicero had lived. And yet, these Antonines were men of great dignity and royal bearing; their courtesy was such as befits great kings. And their world did not for a moment forget that they were masters. The most distinguished men of letters waited outside the palace doors until Antoninus Pius might please to walk abroad; the Senate was all agog to do his wishes; legions in Britain, in Germany, in Rhaetia, Noricum, Pannonia, Maesia, Dacia, Syria, Cappadocia, Egypt, Africa, and Spain, marched hither and thither according to his nod. And the ladies of the imperial family were treated with equal reverence. The imperial title, Augusta, which the Empress bore and Marcus's wife as well,

set the possessor apart, almost like a goddess, and their effigies were stamped with those of goddesses upon the coins. And when Antoninus or Faustina died, the people believed that the divine spirit which had animated a mortal body for a time, returned to its home among the other gods and goddesses. All this should be remembered, when we read this correspondence between these two gentlemen; and then we begin to understand that its friendly equality conformed not so much to the good taste of the young Caesar as to the elemental simplicity, heroic in its unpretending way, of his character.

CHAPTER VIII

FROM RHETORIC TO PHILOSOPHY

AT some time in this period, which cannot now be dated with exactness, Marcus cast aside the study of rhetoric, or, rather, a larger experience of the world of reality detached his interest from that rococo art, with its inadequacy and triviality, for so it must have come to seem to him during the serious moods of young manhood. Poor Fronto was in dismay, but he could do nothing. Marcus ascribes this turnabout on his part to Rusticus, who, he says, taught him "to put aside rhetoric, poetry, and the fastidious niceties of language" (M. A. I, 7). This conversion may have begun about the year 146, for a letter written to Fronto in that year or in the beginning of 147, shows that philosophy has already set to work to crowd out rhetoric:

MY DEAR MASTER:

I am looking forward to your coming with both pleasure and uneasiness; with pleasure (everybody knows why), and as for the uneasiness, I will make a clean breast of it. I have not given the slightest attention to what you told me to write, although I have been quite at leisure. My time has been spent over Aristo's books; they are a source of gratification and discomfort. They teach me better things, and that is gratifying; but, indeed, when they show me how far from those better things my character is, your pupil blushes continually, and is angry with himself that at the age of twenty-five his heart has not drunk in any of these excellent doctrines and noble philosophy. So, I am punished for it,

I am downcast and angry, *j'enrage de tout mon cœur,* I have lost my appetite. I am a slave to these heavy thoughts, and have postponed the task of writing from one day to the next. But now I will try to think up something. And just as a certain Athenian orator advised the people of Athens "to let the laws sleep sometimes," I will ask Aristo's books to excuse me, and I will let them rest awhile, and I will give my whole attention to your dramatic poet. But first I must read some of Cicero's short speeches.

I shall only write on one side of the argument or the other; for Aristo will never sleep so sound as to let me advocate both sides of the same case.

Good-bye, my excellent, worthy Master, the Lady, my Mother, wishes to be remembered to you.

MARCUS.

Aristo was a pupil of Zeno, and held fast to the sterner and more self-denying of Zeno's doctrines. He dismissed logic on the ground that it does not concern us; he condemned physics, because the nature of things is beyond our comprehension; and even if we could understand it, we should not, for all our knowledge, be one whit more righteous, wise, or manly, or have greater mastery over ourselves. Ethics is the only proper study for mankind. And the object of ethics is to convert the heart. Mere precepts are idle, they are but the baggage of a schoolmaster, vain repetitions of "do this" and "don't do that"; it is useless to tell a miser how he ought to spend his money, or a glutton what not to eat. The heart must be converted; and if the heart is purified from illusions, from mistaking falsehood for truth, the man's behavior will be right. Men are born, he used to say, for the very purpose of laying hold on virtue. Right is the only good, wrong the only evil, all things else are utterly indifferent to a man. When asked what sort of a life it is, if we pay no heed whether we are well or ill, whether we

are free from pain or in agony, whether we can keep cold and hunger at arm's length, he answered: "Such a life is magnificent and splendid; you will do what you think is right, you will never lose your temper, you will never know desire, and you will never fear." These doctrines, vigorously expressed, challenged the young man's attention, and sounded like a trumpet in his ears. This conversion is Marcus's great spiritual experience, the most important happening in the years between his adoption as prince imperial and his accession to the throne. It did not, however, at the beginning, reveal its seriousness, for Fronto, in a letter written to congratulate his imperial pupil on an escape from a threatened accident, alludes to Stoicism in a bantering fashion that he could scarcely have used had he apprehended that philosophy would really alienate Marcus from rhetoric.

My Lord:

I give most devout thanks to the gods for preserving you safe and sound. As I know *the maxims you have adopted,* I am sure that you were not at all disturbed; for my part, however much you philosophers may laugh at me, I was very much alarmed. Good-bye, my sweet Lord, may the gods keep you. Please give my respects to my Lady, your Mother.

Fronto.

But whether the change came gradually or abruptly, and was due or not to the admonitions of Rusticus and the austere dogmas of Aristo, or to the gentler influence of Epictetus, it was, as we can see, an inevitable change. Marcus's *Lehrjahre,* which had lasted long, were over and serious life had begun. The heir to an empire, threatened by enemies from without and by weakness and decay within, is not free, like a private citizen, to spare grave attention

for what he has come to look upon as a pretty accomplishment, as an art for littérateurs whose chief ambition is to be applauded in a lecture room, or, at its best, as a minor aid in the government of men. Here was reason enough for giving up rhetoric, but the further step of turning to philosophy, as he said, or, as we should say, to religion, was due to many contributory causes, some that influenced him as an individual, others as a member of society.

Marcus possessed a sensitive spirit and a heroic soul; both had their needs. A simple life of work and kindness and amiability, doing each day some daily good, such as sufficed Antoninus Pius, could not satisfy him; neither could the arts, nor intellectual diversions, such as filled Hadrian's active life; nor ambition and war, as with Trajan. His high-strung soul beheld life as a matter of duty, not of happiness, and he wished to lay hold of whatever strength he could come at, in order to do the full measure of his duty. On the other hand, his sensitive spirit was inclined to doubt, to find vanity lurking behind every semblance of good, and to seek relief in an imperious demand that the world be made intelligible to him; in these respects he was religious-minded, and, whether he knew it or not, he was seeking a religion. He had arrived, I think, quite or very nearly, to the point at which he would have accepted Lord Bacon's words: "It is true, that a little philosophy inclineth Man's minde to Atheisme; But depth in Philosophy bringeth Men's Mindes about to Religion: For while the Minde of Man looketh upon Second Causes Scattered, it may sometimes rest in them, and goe no further; But when it beholdeth the Chaine of them, Confederate and Linked together, it must need flie to *Providence* and *Deitie*." Certainly Marcus was far from the atheism of the Epicureans, and sought, if not to fly to providence and deity, at least to follow the gods. But how? According to the primary doctrine of Stoic philosophy, the way to follow the gods is

to live according to Nature. That was his starting point. In his *Meditations* he records his gratitude to Sextus, Plutarch's grandson, for this conception, *τὴν ἔννοιαν τοῦ κατὰ φύσιν ζῆν* (M. A. I, 9); and he also thanks the gods that he has thought often and with a clear understanding of what life according to Nature really is (M. A. I, 17, §5). Marcus was by no means an original thinker, nor of a metaphysical cast of mind; he was groping his way for a religious conception of life, and accepted this article of the Stoic creed without hesitation.

But what is this Nature, with which we must make our lives accord? Before his eyes passed multitudinous processes of change, movements, goings to and fro; and, most restless of all, the strange power that we call life, which from tiny beginnings draws to itself particles of matter, organizes them, uses them, and then, moving on from infancy to maturity, from maturity to decay, finally lays down its burden and is lost to mortal eyes, leaving its ancient house to crumble and pass on to other uses. Nature, mechanical and yet divine, is this sum of changes; she is the universe in its active, impersonal aspect; nevertheless (and here comes in the element of paradox so frequent in Stoic philosophy), she displays touches almost of a mother's care. Nature never rests, she is always up and doing, shifting and changing all things forever (M. A. VIII, 6); not from mere wanton restlessness, but in order to keep the universe ever fresh and young (M. A. VII, 25). Thanks to her

> Die unbegreiflich hohen Werke
> Sind herrlich wie am ersten Tag.

And whatever she does to each individual component part is for its good, and not for its good at some remote time by means of the attainment of some ultimate end, but at the very moment she confers it (M. A. X, 20; II, 3), and whatever each part does (for each part likewise is forever shift-

ing and changing) contributes to the welfare of the whole (M. A. II, 3). Nature takes the old and transmutes it into the new; she does not waste, she does not want, she leaves no scraps (M. A. VIII, 50). She goes direct by her own short cut toward her end (M. A. IV, 51). What we call decay and death are really noble and seasonable; they are Nature's metamorphoses, which keep the universe forever at the fullness of its powers (M. A. XII, 23). We may trust her, for she has regard for all her wards (M. A. V, 8, §2). The careless eye may not see the beauty that lurks in her ways; but lift the veil which custom and inattention throw over familiar sights and we shall see that beauty follows at Nature's heels, and attends her handiwork like its shadow. Behold bread in the baking, the very rifts and crannies in the crust have a charm of their own, or the fig split open by its own maturity, or the olive in the buxom beauty of overripeness, or the drooping grain bent beneath the weight of its golden ears, or the lion's frown, or the foam that drips from the wild boar's mouth (M. A. III, 2). Even thorns and mud trace their kinship with the august and beautiful (M. A. VI, 36). Nature, despite her myriad manifestations is one, she is unity in multiplicity; her primal attributes are law, harmony, and beauty.

His note-book does not reveal the course and steps of his reasoning, but it is evident that, by an analogy between the human soul and the universal soul, he lightly leaps to the conclusion that Nature is ethical. Somewhat in this fashion perhaps: Man is a part of Nature, therefore his morality is a part of Nature's morality; and if righteousness can be found only in man and not elsewhere in Nature, yet it is obvious that just as the mind of man, long eras before creation, was implicit in whatever elemental stuff the cosmos is wrought out of, so likewise righteousness was there, unborn, invisible, but ennobling the elements that held and hid it, by its mere promise of ultimate existence. Man may judge

Nature, so he imagined, by the beatings of his own heart. What does she demand but high-mindedness, freedom, simplicity, charity, and holiness (M. A. V, 9)? Nature to him seems passionately ethical. She cares for nothing but virtue; she snaps her fingers at life and death, at worldly success or failure, pleasure or pain, riches or poverty; she tosses all such things, like the trash that they are, to the good and the bad alike (M. A. II, 11). She makes lower things servants of the higher, and sets her face toward righteousness (M. A. XI, 10). Then, to complete the circle and come back to where he started, Marcus infers that because Nature is righteous, man must be righteous. Righteousness is the essence of a life according to Nature. To do wrong is impiety. To be unjust is impiety. Nature has fashioned rational creatures for mutual service. Such is her will; he that transgresses is guilty of impiety. Nature, too, is Truth, and the first cause of all that is true. The liar therefore is guilty of impiety; and he also who speaks falsely, although by error. It is impiety also to pursue pleasure as if it were good, or to shun pain as if it were evil; or to be other than indifferent to life and death, to good report and evil report (M. A. IX, 1). He that complains of whatever happens is a rebel against Nature; moreover it is wrong to do harm to any man, or even to turn away from him, or to play the hypocrite, or act or think with idle aimlessness, neglectful of the goal. My body may rot and pass away, my soul may be but as a dream or a mist, but I suffer no evil if I follow Nature (M. A. II, 17). No man can hinder or stay me from living according to the reason of my nature; and nothing can befall me contrary to the reason of universal Nature (M. A. VI, 58). Her path and mine are one (M. A. V, 8). Nor is it hard to live in accordance with Nature, for we are so born and bred that we can bear what may befall us (M. A. V, 18); so is it also with the beast and plant. Nature will not lay on us too heavy a load (M. A. VIII, 46). If I

think the burden too great, the fault lies in my thinking so (M. A. X, 8).

This is not philosophy, nor yet theology; it is a creed irradiated by poetry, a creed that testifies to an inner need similar to that which impels the poet and musician to express the yearnings and aspirations that well up within their hearts. And I imagine that in the first fervor of his interest in religion, Marcus pushed his outposts further than he was able to maintain them, and that if his *Meditations* had been written then, we should have found them full of a reverent warmth such as we now find only here and there in an occasional sentence. Nevertheless, in this attitude toward Nature, Marcus is not far from the attitude of the Christian toward his God. Nature is a divine power, full of dignity, purity, and truth. With her fear is out of place; rites and ceremonies, sacrifices, whether to appease, to conciliate, or to thank, are out of place. She rewards the faithful by letting them perceive that they are taking their parts in the accomplishment of her everlasting task; and what more could the soul, at least the proud Roman soul, desire?

In this doctrine of life according to Nature is certainly the Christian doctrine of submission to the divine will. And yet Marcus could not cross the chasm between impersonal Nature and the personal deity. Nature cannot for him deepen into Nature's God. He had long been taught to reject the ancient deities of the common people, Jupiter and his fellows. Philosophy could not accept such anthropomorphism. Philosophy had rejected personality as a divine attribute, and now, although it was ready to concede unity, reason, beauty, righteousness, it could not turn completely about and personify the eternal force that moves through all things.

What Marcus meant, what definiteness of conception he had in mind, when he uses the word *god* or *gods,* was, I think, in the nature of an emphasis upon what we, today,

should call the spiritual aspect of the universe, rather than any likeness to a definite and distinct deity. When, in a more emotional mood, he feels Nature closer, more kindly, then he falls back upon the native language of piety, and, out of gratitude and with a sense of duty half filial, gives utterance to his sense of loyalty (M. A. III, 9; III, 6, §2) and acknowledges our duty to follow the gods (M. A. X, 11), to imitate them (M. A. X, 8, §2), to reverence them (M. A. V, 33; VI, 30, §1), and to live with them (M. A. V, 27).

This is, it seems to me, as far as his religion goes. Nature cannot rise higher than this; she remains the ruling reason of the universe, moving on her mighty march in obedience to her own ethical constitution, setting all parts to harmony as she goes, and scattering beauty where she passes; and she maketh for righteousness. She is the embodiment of duty:

> Flowers laugh before thee on their beds,
> And fragrance in thy footing treads;
> Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong;
> And the most ancient heavens, through thee, are fresh and strong,

and she also stoops to the humbler functions of guiding erring men who seek a rule of conduct. Marcus's attitude is not unlike Wordsworth's. His conversion, if one may use the word, was quite different from the passionate, emotional upheavals that we find in Christians who suddenly are blessed with a vivid consciousness of the reality of God. He hears no *Tolle, lege;* he sees no divine union. But in his rational, Roman way, he believes in that profound moral change which Christians believe to be wrought by the grace of God. He says: "If you take upon yourself these names—good, modest, truthful, wise, meek, magnanimous—cleave unto them. And remember that wisdom comes from an intellectual comprehension of each several thing, that meekness means the willing acceptance of whatever universal Nature

shall assign you, that magnanimity lifts the soul high above corporeal ease, love of fame, death, and all such things. If you hold fast to these virtues (not seeking a reputation for them on the lips of men) *you will become a new man and you will enter into a new life"* (M. A. X, 8). It seems likely that, at this time of his seeking after an interpretation of life in terms of human satisfaction, his conversion, as I have called it, he was able to accept Epictetus's dogma, *"Esse arcanas causas ad quas paucorum potuit pervenire curiositas,* There are mysterious forces at work beyond the understanding of all but a few." And may it not have been a flashing up of this youthful transcendentalism that, in his bereaved old age, directed his footsteps to the sacred precincts of Demeter at Eleusis?

Marcus was seeking a religion, as I have said, but there was none at hand that he could accept. The old Roman religion was a mere series of ceremonies, with nothing sacred except lingering patriotic sentiment, and withal marred by superstitions, such as those at Lanuvium. Foreign religions were no better. Syrian priests, like mountebanks, trundled images of the *Magna Mater* about the countryside, hoping to wheedle peasants out of their pennies; the worshippers of the Egyptian gods offered sensuous exaltation, and mysteries that disregarded reason. Christianity, as we understand it, was utterly unknown to him. He was compelled to look for religion in philosophy; for there only, as he thought, and perhaps thought truly, could a man, without doing wrong to his reason, find spiritual help to enable him to do his duty and keep his soul pure.

CHAPTER IX

THE INFLUENCE OF SKEPTICISM

MARCUS, in youth at least, was one of those delicate, impressionable characters that are pushed this way or the other by influences that would leave a more stolid nature unaffected. Beauty will draw sensitive spirits to itself, so will heroism or grandeur; ugliness, foulness, or depravity will repel them. In these respects the spirit is mobile in proportion to its virtue and its refinement; but, for all that, it need not be less strong, less poised, or less tenacious. Such a character, as the Stoics would say, is in a higher state of tension. In this period of what I call his conversion, virtue and religion did not draw Marcus as the lodestone draws; rather, as I think, he sought refuge in them. He wished to find himself walled about against grossness, profligacy, meanness. He turned to the august impersonality of Nature as to a palladium, out of reach of the impure oriental superstitions that were rampant in Rome. His insistence upon the dogma of complete surrender to the will of Nature is his method of rebuke to skeptics and scoffers. He climbed the mountain of sanctity in order to breathe pure air, far above the grosser vapors that spread over the lowlands of life. Skepticism, mockery, irony in respect to what he regarded as sacred, were very distasteful to him. He could not enjoy satire even when gay and debonair, the feathered wit that stings, the laughing mockery that scorns. He took life, as we say, very hard; he felt that religion was too necessary for men to be approached otherwise than with reverence. And all those qualities, so delightful to the careless-minded, which we, inaccurately

perhaps, sum up under the adjective *Voltairian,* like the wind blowing on the traveller, made him wrap himself more closely in his principles. There was much mockery in his world. The religious creed, for which Marcus Aurelius felt so strong a sentiment, offered a broad target for those whom he calls "mockers of the ephemeral life of man," Menippus, Lucian, and such. And I do not think we can quite understand Marcus's austere puritanism of mind, his intense seriousness, his refusal to sympathize with scoffers (for all his life long until his deathbed he put a stern restraint upon what he then showed he possessed, *le don de sourire de son œuvre*), unless we see this antagonistic Voltairian spirit at work, pulling down, undermining, and hollowing out. Lucian, that tricksy sprite, indifferent to truth, careless of social duty, fond of slander, a gatherer of roses while he could, is the very antithesis to Marcus Aurelius, oriental as against Roman, Epicurean as against Stoic, pleasure lover as against puritan; and I think that an abstract of one of his satirical comedies will serve as a background that shall cause Marcus's character, by its complete detachment, to stand out more vividly. Lucian is making fun, not only of the old religion of the Olympian gods, to which Stoicism was tender, but of Stoicism itself.

ZEUS IN HIGH TRAGEDY

Zeus is discovered, wan, groaning, and in great agitation. Hermes and Athene, much alarmed, endeavor to comfort him, but Hera approaches with a sneer: "It's Danaë, Semele, or Europa; this is the way he behaves when he is in love." Zeus succeeds in calming himself, and explains that the affairs of the gods are in the worst way; Damis the Epicurean, in a dispute with Timocles the Stoic, had asserted that the gods do not exist, let alone that they do not oversee or direct events. The two philosophers are going to finish their debate next day, and the Athenians are eagerly awaiting the

issue. If Damis wins, farewell to honors, sacrifices, public worship; the gods will be but idle names. Of course there is great and general alarm on Olympus. All the gods and goddesses are summoned in council. To make his speech worthy of the occasion Zeus adapts the opening of an oration by Demosthenes, but unable to maintain this heroic style, he tells his tale baldly: "Yesterday, as you know, Mnesitheus the sea captain was offering sacrifice in return for the safety of his ship, which had nearly been wrecked off Caphereus, and those of us whom he invited dined at the Piraeus. After the libations you all went off, some one way, some another; but as it was early, I went to take an evening stroll in the Ceramicus, thinking about Mnesitheus's stinginess. To feast sixteen gods he had sacrificed one cock, an old consumptive cock at that, and four incense cakes, jolly well mouldy, that wouldn't burn on the fire or start enough smoke for you to smell it with the tip of your nose, and he had promised whole hecatombs while he was drifting on the rocks.

"And, as I was thinking about this, I came to the Painted Porch, where I found a great crowd, some within but most outside, and a few sitting on the seats, bawling with might and main. I thought it likely that they were philosophers of the argumentative species (and I was right), so I stopped to hear what they had to say. I was wrapped in a thick cloud,—and adapting my clothes to their style and pulling down my beard, I made myself look very like a philosopher. Then, quite incog, I elbowed my way through the crowd. I found Damis the Epicurean, that old rascal, and Timocles the Stoic, who is a perfect brick, disputing away to heart's content; at least Timocles had already shouted his voice to a whisper and was sweating, for Damis with his sardonic smile had almost thrown him into a paroxysm.

"And their argument was all about us. That d—d Damian contended that we do not exert any providence on behalf of

men, that we do not oversee what goes on among them; indeed he denied that we exist at all, for certainly what he said was equivalent to that. And some of them clapped him. But Timocles took our side, and fought, and got angry, and maintained our cause in every way; he praised the care we take, and pointed out how we govern with the most seemly order, and arrange for everything, and he had some applause. However, he got very tired, and began to speak wretchedly, and the crowd began to give all their attention to Damis—so aware of the danger, I ordered the shades of night to fall fast and break up the conference. The two philosophers agreed to settle the question finally the next day and took leave. I followed the crowd, and as they went home I overheard them praising Damis and maintaining that his side was much the better. Some of them, however, thought they ought not to condemn the other side prematurely, but to wait and see what Timocles had to say tomorrow. O Deities! It is for this that I have called you together, no slight matter, when you consider that we depend on men for all our worship and glory,—all our income. Now, if they are convinced either that we gods don't exist at all, or that, if we do, we don't exercise any providence over them, we shall have no sacrifices from earth, no oblations, no worship, and we shall sit in Heaven doing nothing and horribly hungry, deprived of our feasts, our festivals, our games, our sacrifices, our midnight vigils, our processions. So I say that, under these circumstances, we must all put our heads together to save ourselves and devise some way by which Timocles shall win, and the audience decide that he is in the right, and that Damis shall be laughed out of court; for I have very little confidence that Timocles will win by himself, unless we can do something for him."

The gods are then invited to give their counsels. Poseidon, who lives in the remote depths of the sea, suggests that a thunderbolt should dispose of Damis. At which Zeus cries

out: "Oh, Poseidon! Is this a joke? Or, have you completely forgotten that we have no such power, but that the Fates do the spinning, and decree how one man shall die by a thunderbolt, another by the sword, another by fever or consumption? If I had had any power in the matter, do you think I would have allowed those sacrilegious robbers to get away from Olympia a couple of days ago, after they had cut off two of my curls weighing six pounds apiece, without thunderbolting them? Or would you have let that fisherman steal your trident from the temple at Geraestus? Besides, people will think that we are angry because the shoe pinches, and are afraid of what Damis may say, and therefore have got rid of him, without waiting for Timocles to argue the matter out. They will think it a mere victory by default."

Poseidon: You think so, but it seems to me that I have hit upon a short cut to victory.

Zeus: Come off! That's a moon-calf idea.

Apollo then takes the floor: "This Timocles is an honest, god-fearing man, and he knows Stoic doctrines very accurately, so much so that he teaches wisdom to many young men and receives no inconsiderable compensation, and when he is conversing in private with his pupils he is very persuasive; but in speaking before a crowd he is utterly devoid of *sang-froid,* and his language is that of an uneducated man, and mixed with barbarisms, and in consequence at public meetings he provokes laughter; he does not talk connectedly but stammers and gets confused, especially whenever, in spite of these defects, he wishes to make a parade of rhetoric. He is extremely subtle and keen-edged, so people say who are well acquainted with Stoicism; but when he is discoursing and expounding, he is so feeble that he spoils and muddles what he wants to say. He does not make anything clear; he puts forward propositions that are like riddles, and in answer to questions he is even more obscure. His listeners don't know what he is talking about and laugh

at him. In my judgment it is absolutely necessary to speak clearly, and, more than anything else, to take great pains in order that the audience shall understand what you say."

Apollo's eulogy upon clear pronouncement calls forth from the other gods some sarcastic references to his own sayings at Delphi and elsewhere, and a challenge for him to prophesy on the spot whether Timocles or Damis shall win. Apollo protests that he has no tripod at hand, or incense or holy water; but Zeus encourages him, so he accepts the challenge. He turns pale, his eyes roll, his hair stands on end, he bursts into a demoniacal frenzy, and utters nonsensical verses, which end (I quote Mr. Harmon's translation):

Yet when the hook-taloned vulture the grasshopper grips
in his clutches,
Then shall the rainbearing crows make an end of their
cawing forever:
Vict'ry shall go to the mules, and the ass will rejoice in his
offspring!

Criticism upon this prophecy is interrupted by Hercules who speaks to the original question: "For my part, Father, although I am only a naturalized god, I shall not hesitate to say what I think. After the philosophers have met and have begun the discussion about us, then, in case Timocles is getting the best of it, we will permit the proceedings to continue; but if it turns out the other way, then, if you approve, I will give the Porch a shake and throw it down on top of Damis, so that the d—d fellow shall stop his irreligious insolence."

Zeus: O Hercules! By Hercules! You bumpkin! you Boeotian! What are you saying? For the sake of one rascal to destroy so many honest men, and the Porch with pictures of Marathon, of Miltiades, of Aeschylus's brother! etc.

The council is interrupted by news that Timocles and Damis have begun their debate. Zeus bids the Hours open the gates of heaven, and he looks down: "By Hercules, what a crowd has come to listen! I am not a bit satisfied with Timocles, he is all of a tremble and muddled up. He will ruin everything today. It is obvious that he will not be able to stand up against Damis. But we must do what we can: Let us pray for him."

The gods listened to the debate.

TIMOCLES: Damis, you temple-robber, why do you say that the gods do not exist, and exercise no providence over men?

DAMIS: No. You answer me first why you think that the gods do exist.

TIMOCLES: Oh, no! You answer, you rascal.

DAMIS: Oh, no! Your turn.

ZEUS: Our man is a great deal better and louder in this kind of roughhousing. Bully for you, Timocles! Pour out your scurrilities! There's where your strength lies! in everything else he'll put a hook in your mouth and show you're a bullhead.

TIMOCLES: Now, by Athene, I won't answer you first.

DAMIS: All right, Timocles, ask your question; that oath you've sworn puts you ahead. But stop your scurrilities, if you please.

TIMOCLES: Good enough. Tell me then, you cuss, don't you believe in Providence?

DAMIS: Not a bit.

TIMOCLES: What do you say? Is there no Providence in anything?

DAMIS: No.

TIMOCLES: No god takes any care of this universe?

DAMIS: No.

TIMOCLES: And everything goes along without a purpose?

DAMIS: Yes.

TIMOCLES: Men! Do you hear that wicked creature, and forbear to stone him to death?

DAMIS: Why do you try to stir up these men against me, Timocles? And who are you, anyhow, to get angry on behalf of the gods over this matter, when they are not angry themselves? They haven't hurt me, although they have been hearing me a long time,—supposing that they can hear.

TIMOCLES: Damis, they hear, yes indeed they hear, and they will take vengeance on you in their good time.

DAMIS: And when, pray, should they find time to pay attention to me, since, as you say, they have so much to do, looking after the infinite number of things in the universe? That's the reason why they haven't punished you for your everlasting perjuries and everything else—but I must not break our agreement, and let myself be forced into speaking ill of you. And yet I do not see what better evidence they could offer of their providence than utterly to exterminate a bad man like you. But it is plain that they are away from home, perhaps on a visit to the blameless Ethiopians. At any rate it is their constant custom to go and dine with them, and sometimes on their own invitation.

TIMOCLES: O Damis, what can I say to this shameless impudence?

DAMIS: Just what I have been eager to hear from you for a long time: how you got your faith that the gods exercise providence.

Timocles then tries to justify his faith, by the order in nature, the revolutions of the sun and moon, by the seasons, plants, and animals, by reason in man; but this does not satisfy Damis, who answers that recurrent phenomena do not prove Providence. Timocles refers to the authority of Homer; whereupon Damis picks out the passages where Zeus cheats, where the gods fall foul of one another, where Artemis lost her temper at not being invited to a feast, and so forth.

ZEUS: By gemini, gods, how the crowd shouted at that and clapped Damis! It looks as if our man didn't know what to do. At any rate, he is sweating and trembling; it's clear that he is going to give up the fight; he is already looking round to see how he can slip away, and run for it.

Timocles, however, holds on. He brings in Euripides, but Damis is able to quote Euripides on his side. Then the Stoic cites the universal belief in gods and universal worship. Damis retorts by enumerating contradictory beliefs in different places; the Scythians worship a scimitar, the Ethiopians worship day, the Assyrians a dove, the Persians fire, and the Egyptians a bull, an ibis, a crocodile, or a cat. Timocles tries oracles and altars with no better success, then:

TIMOCLES: Tell me, you d—d rascal, have you ever made a voyage?

DAMIS: Many a time.

TIMOCLES: Well, then, whether it was the wind that carried you along, or the rowers, anyhow it was the captain who steered the ship and kept it safe, wasn't it?

DAMIS: Yes, of course.

TIMOCLES: Then, if the ship could not have made her voyage without a captain to steer, do you fancy that this universe can go along without captain or pilot?

ZEUS: Bully! Timocles has used a mighty good simile with great sagacity.

DAMIS (*jumping at the illustration*): The sea captain makes a definite plan, gives orders, and maintains everything aboard in shipshape order and seemliness. But look at the universe, the mainsail is lashed to the bowsprit, the jib is entangled with the helm, half the sailors are landlubbers, and in the first cabin sit paricides, thieves, and profligates, while the good and virtuous crowd the steerage. Socrates drinks poison, but Sardanapalus wallows in luxury. If there were a captain, would these things be so?

Foiled again, Timocles plays his trump card.

Zeus: What can he be going to say?

Timocles: Now look and see if my reasoning is not pure logic, and if by any possibility you can upset it. IF THERE ARE ALTARS, THERE ARE GODS. THERE ARE ALTARS, THEREFORE THERE ARE GODS. WHAT DO YOU SAY TO THAT?

Damis: When I've had my fill of laughing, I'll answer you.

But he can hardly stop laughing long enough to jeer, and finally exclaims that the argument did, indeed, settle the dispute.

Timocles: Oh, you're *ironical,* are you? you body-snatcher! you dirty blackguard! You should be spit on, and whipped, and thrown down the cesspool! I guess we know what kind of a man your father was, and your mother was a ——, and you strangled your brother, you deboshed, etc., etc. Hie! Don't escape till I give you a thrashing.

And the irritated Stoic pursues his adversary with a brick.

To the careless-minded, to those who are able to enjoy the human comedy, and laugh, with Figaro, at its folly, its vice, its nonsense, and vanity, who regard the world as a chance combination of atoms, and life as a bubble that breaks, this rollicking satire of Lucian is very delightful. But for him who is painfully striving to perform what he deems the part of a man and a Roman, to prop up a falling world, to follow as best he may the footsteps of the gods, and bring his will into harmony with the universal will, such banter as that of this cynical Mercutio is like acid upon raw flesh. The excuse that Lucian does not attack virtue but foolishness, not religion but superstition, cannot be seriously maintained; and, in the eyes of the religious-minded the aspect of the case is not changed because in their supporters, as Montaigne says, *il y a plus d'opiniastreté et de picoterie*

qu'il n'appartient à une si sainte profession. The religious-minded neither see nor care that Timocles is no more exaggerated than Malvolio or M. Jourdain; they are not dealing with comedy, but what to them is the high and noble tragedy of life. They are fighting the battle of God, and the mockers, since they are not with them, are against them. Marcus Aurelius felt this, and at the sound of sarcastic laughter climbed the higher on his lonely mountain top to worship, under the tranquil stars, that neither laugh nor mock, the Stoic ideal of holiness. If the reader, however, accepts the poet's saying that "ripeness is all," and believes that in ripeness *le don de sourire de son œuvre* must find its place, let him remember that Marcus attained to that ripeness and died *"ridens res humanas."*

CHAPTER X

OTHER MOTIVES

THE mystic and sensual superstitions that came from the East, and this mockery of religious traditions that were still of deep sentimental significance to old-fashioned Romans, aroused in Marcus, I think, a stronger aversion than he himself was aware of. And besides these, other repellant influences were at work; the grossness and brutality in Roman ways and customs, such as the horrible cruelty of the amphitheatre, turned him toward the spiritual life. From grossness he shrunk back with an almost monastic delicacy, and he repeats to himself ethical ejaculations, as if of themselves they possessed a purifying potency: "Keep yourself simple, good, uncorrupt, honorable" (M. A. VI, 30). "A man should make a habit of thinking only those things, about which, if he were suddenly asked, 'What are you thinking of at this minute?' he could answer frankly at once, 'This or this.' So that from what he said, it would immediately be obvious that his thoughts were sincere, kind, and proper for a man who is considerate of his duties toward his fellows, and pays no heed to pleasures, or thoughts of sensual gratification, or to rivalry, or envy, or suspicion, or any other thing which he would blush to tell he was thinking of" (M. A. III, 4, §2). And the idea of keeping himself "unspotted from the world" is frequently present to his mind (M. A. II, 13); so are also the moral dangers of his position. The lives of Caligula, Nero, and Domitian, revealed what might recur again. The mere thought revolts him: "No mummer, nor harlot!" (M. A. V, 28). "Think [he jots down] of the pleasures of the brigand,

the sensual brute, the murderer, the tyrant!" (M. A. VI, 34). And however far the lives of Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, and his own, might seem to be from those terrible predecessors, the thought of what imperial power might do would sometimes rise up before him like a hideous apparition: "Take care not to be Caesarified, keep from that dye —for such things happen" (M. A. VI, 30). The *Meditations*, it is true, embody a much later cast of thought, and not that of his youth; but they show the road that his mind was to travel, and betray the reasons why he abandoned rhetoric.

In addition to these personal factors, there was a contributory cause of which he could hardly have been aware with his waking consciousness. The fatal words, *mene, mene, tekel, upharsin,* had been written on the wall of the Domus Tiberiana, but no Roman eye had the prophetic insight to perceive and to interpret them. And yet the *Meditations* express something more elemental than the self-communings of a man who has eaten the bread of life and found it bitter and drunk of the cup of life and found it vanity; they suggest the psychical record of a soul that down in its unconscious depths is sensitive to the first tremors of a universal commotion. It is the book of a man who buckles his armor on to meet invisible evils, as well as those that he can see. Some delicate instinct within him, like that of migratory birds, shivered at the first touch of autumnal chill which heralded a winter that should strip the Roman oaks of all their glory.

Outwardly, however, the Roman Empire looked as solid as the Colosseum. To the casual eye the city was at the zenith of its splendor. Aelius Aristides of Smyrna, for example, the scholar and man of letters, merely expressed in his oratorical way what all foreigners felt: "Rome is the metropolis of the world's business, mercantile as well as political. Merchandise from India and Arabia is imported

in such great quantities that you would believe those countries stripped bare and that Indians and Arabians must come to Rome to get the products of their native lands. Clothes from Babylon, ornaments from the farthest Barbarians, are carried to the imperial city in greater quantities and with greater ease than goods from Naxos to Athens. Sicily, Egypt, the cultivated acres of Africa, are Roman farms. And ships, sailing in and out, are so continuous that the wonder is, not that the harbors, but that the sea itself, can give them room. In short, all things come together in Rome, merchandise, traffickers, harvests, the products of mines, all that handicraft creates or the earth grows." And the outward aspect of the city was commensurate with its wealth and mercantile activity. Students of archaeology say that Rome was the most magnificent city that ever existed. The Colosseum, Hadrian's Mausoleum, and the Pantheon still hint at what they were in their prime, but to build up, restore and roof a hundred temples, to gird them with columns, to decorate them with mosaics, paintings, bronze, and statuary, to crowd into one city the treasures of Egypt, Greece, the Aegean islands, Asia Minor, and Sicily, and show Rome as it was, with palaces, theatres, domes, temples, "all bright and glittering in the smokeless air," would require the wand of Prospero. The city covered its seven hills and the spaces between, and sprawled over the adjacent plain and across the river; great roads, admirably paved, radiated out in all directions. Aqueducts—the Claudia, Julia, Marcia, Virgo, and others—running on arches, of which each single span might well have served to commemorate the conquest of a province, fetched water from miles away across the campagna. On the Capitoline Hill stood the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, its gilded roof all glorious in the sun. On the Palatine, the imperial palaces, the Domus Tiberiana, the Domus Flavia, displayed their peristyles, their colonnades, statues, pillars of granite

and porphyry, their alabaster and colored marbles, their gardens, aviaries and fountains, their outer courts, where Favorinus and his fellow scholars and writers, together with military officers, civilians of all kinds, place-hunters, envoys from the provinces, and many another, waited to catch the Emperor's eye as he walked forth from the palace. Near by stood the temples to Magna Mater and to Apollo, and in the portico of Apollo's temple, or close by, stood a well-furnished library, and in the Tiberian palace another, where Marcus and Fronto used to borrow books. On the Esquiline, along the remains of the old Servian wall, were the public gardens, which Maecenas had laid out and bequeathed to the Emperors, and a stroll through the city brought the bewildered foreigner, who in later times might chance to be an Emperor, to the Circus Flaminius, the Circus Maximus, the theatres of Pompey and of Marcellus, to the baths of Nero, of Trajan, of Agrippa, to temples of the gods and goddesses of Greece and Rome, of Isis and Serapis, and of deified Emperors. Everywhere monuments proclaimed aloud that Rome had despoiled the world to make herself beautiful.

When Marcus, for instance, rode to town from Lanuvium, he came by the Via Appia. As he approached the city, he rode past farmhouses, fields of grain, pasture land, vegetable patches, fruit trees; past luxurious villas, with gardens traversed by shady walks and adorned with shrines, statues, plants, and flowering shrubs, among others, three miles from town, that of Herodes Atticus; then nearer the city, past long lines of tombs and monuments, and, as the houses and buildings crowded closer and closer together, he came upon first one and then another sculptured arch that celebrated the victories of conquering Emperors. He would probably dismount before he reached the Palatine Hill, perhaps where the road turned hard by the southern end of the Circus Maximus (for it was particularly incumbent on a

prince not to violate the ordinance against riding and driving in the streets during the busy hours of the day), give his horse to a servant and continue his way on foot, with the Palatine Hill on his left, walking directly toward the mighty Flavian amphitheatre. Before reaching it, he might turn sharp to the left, slip into the Nova Via and take the short path up the eastern slope of the Palatine alongside the temple of Apollo; but if he was in a mood to enjoy seeing the life of the city, he would take the second turning, pass the great double temple of Venus and Rome, built by his imperial grandfather Hadrian, the most magnificent in the city, continue on under the arch of Titus, with its pictorial story of the sack of Jerusalem, and come into the Sacra Via, and on to the Forum, the heart of Rome. Here were a multitude of people, buying, selling, crying their wares, chaffering, crowded about shops and booths, or around a pedlar who had just lifted his pack from his shoulders; here was a mingling of all races, Romans, Italians, Spaniards, Gauls, Greeks, Egyptians, merchants from Cyprus, Tyre, Byzantium, Smyrna, scholars and rabbis from Alexandria, lawyers from Carthage and Cirta, men of letters from Lyons, Nicaea, Samosata, sophists from Athens, officers on leave from a garrison on the Danube or the Euphrates or from York, sailors up from Ostia, a troop of the Praetorian Guard marching back to its quarters, oriental priests, rascally adventurers, office-seekers from all over the Empire, great ladies or gouty old Senators in their litters, surrounded by smartly dressed slaves, a dignified procession of gentlemen celebrating religious rites, tall, stately, bewildered Barbarians, good schoolboys walking beside their pedagogues, naughty schoolboys darting round a knot of politicians and pursued by their irate attendants, idle young swells ogling the shop-girls, beggars, street boys playing *mora,* and all (except the Barbarians) talking, gesticulating, and shrugging their shoulders as hard as they

could. Half the motley crowd wished to stay where it was; the other half wished to push its way on, up the Sacra Via, past the long row of white pillars ranged along the splendid Basilica Aemilia, past the newly built temple in honor of Diva Faustina, past the sacred precincts of the Vestals, or, in the other direction, down through the Forum, past shrines and statues, to the Rostra, and beyond. But to get to the Domus Tiberiana, Marcus would face westward, leave the Forum between the southern end of the Basilica Julia and the temple of Castor, and follow the Vicus Tuscus until, a little beyond the temple of Augustus, he could turn into the Clivus Victoriae and so ascend the Palatine Hill, to the Domus Tiberiana.

These buildings that I have enumerated were all rich and splendid, some magnificent; but strangers were still more impressed by the new forums to the north of the Forum Romanum, which, beginning on the further side of the Basilica Aemilia, had been laid out in prodigal succession, the Forum of Vespasian, with its temple of Peace, that of Nerva with its temple of Minerva, that of Augustus with its temple to Mars the Avenger, and next beyond, through an arch, the unequalled Forum of Trajan. Here, in the centre of a spacious court, enclosed by noble colonnades, stood a bronze equestrian statue of the great Emperor, and in the half-circling ends, which were paved with white marble, were ranged statues of famous men and gilded trophies of military glory. On the further side of this square stood the Basilica Ulpia, and beyond that a public library, divided into two wings, and in between the wings the great column surmounted by Trajan's statue and pictured with his Dacian victories. And still beyond stood the temple that Hadrian had built in honor of his imperial Father. It seemed as if mortal glory could go no further.

Nothing that Marcus beheld with his bodily eyes but showed forth conquest, power, magnificence. Nevertheless,

a shining outside may not be an index to what lies within. Political, economic, and social ills were sapping the imperial strength. The burden of Empire had proved too great. Rome was no longer able to supply the military and civil ability necessary to hold the world steady upon her shoulders. Conquest had marched faster than she had been able to impose her ways and usages. The subject lands had not had time to grow together into a homogeneous whole. Britain, Gaul, Spain, the provinces along the Rhine and the Danube, still needed the hand both of the master and the protector. Greece and the Hellenistic East looked down with intellectual disdain upon their conquerors. Egypt was wholly alien; Jewry was bitterly hostile. Italy herself was exhausted and prematurely old. Spoils and tribute had corrupted the old integrity of the Roman people. Taxation and military service had wrought great changes for the worse. The rich had grown richer, while the poor had become poorer. Small farms had been swallowed up in great estates; tillage had given place to sheep-raising. Slavery had wrought its ill effects on both public and private morals. A military state, waxing in strength, may derive advantage from slaves to do its drudgery; yet when a state passes its prime, and has begun to wane, slavery corrupts it in a thousand ways. It brings honest labor into disrepute, it encourages idleness, vice, intrigue, untruthfulness, and all the baser qualities. And, at Rome, the frequent manumission of the more educated and capable slaves was creating a class which had no part in the Roman religious and patriotic traditions, and, instead of adding strength, weakened the State by indifference toward the public weal and by greedy pursuit of wealth and social advancement. The lower class of the city of Rome itself had sunk to a degraded populace, dependent for their food upon grain doled out by the government, and for their amusement on gladiatorial shows. The whole Empire, mouldering and decaying within,

had become hollow at the core. Had it been allowed to live in peace it might have lingered on for centuries; but there was no peace. From the very beginning on the Palatine Hill, the life of Rome had been one continuous struggle with her neighbors; and for nine centuries the Romans had been victorious and pushed their boundaries farther and farther. Trajan's conquests marked the flood; and then the ebb set in. The energy within had begun to grow cold and dwindle; and the struggle, no longer for dominion but defence, dulled the ancient hardihood, and rendered the hour of defeat merely a matter of soon or late.

Of all this, I think, Marcus had a secret and mysterious inkling. His memoranda show how he tried to persuade himself that change is according to Nature and therefore good. "The Nature of the universe likes nothing so much as to change whatever is and to create new forms of like pattern" (M. A. IV, 36). "Does any man favor change? What is dearer or nearer to Nature?" (M. A. VII, 18). "It is no worse for a little box to be broken up than to be put together" (M. A. VII, 23). "All that you see, at any time, may be changed by Nature that rules the universe" (M. A. VII, 25). "Everything is undergoing change" (M. A. IX, 19). In fact, I think, there is no other thought on which he dwells so insistently. And, Rome, proud Roman that he was, must have been present to his mind.

During early manhood, however, those feelings of repugnance, aversion, and disgust, of which I have spoken in preceding chapters, and these vague apprehensions of danger to Rome and to civilization, which must have taken shape and become clear and definite enough after his accession to the throne, may have been no more than shadows passing over his spirit, rather to be attributed to seasons of ill health and corporeal depression than to the presence of any understood dangers. But be my explanations right or wrong, Marcus evidently underwent a strong revulsion

of feeling, an aversion to what on a sudden seemed self-indulgence in frivolous amusement, which (since in his case Christian modes of expression are not out of place) I may call a turning to things of the spirit, a conversion from the immediate and temporary to what is most real and permanent. Under the influence of this new mood he betook himself to philosophy. He read Epictetus, and accepted all that his reason permitted of what the master taught concerning faith in God; and fashioned a religion for himself, and not for himself only, but also for many persons who are unable to accept supernatural dogmas. And as it is not his valiant efforts to uphold the Roman Empire and maintain ancient civilization against a multitude of enemies that keeps his memory fresh and honored, but his little book of *Meditations,* it is no exaggeration to say that this conversion is the most important episode in these years which were outwardly spent in preparation against the time when he should become Emperor.

The reign of Antoninus lasted twenty-two years, and never brought the shadow of a cloud between the Emperor and his heir. During these years the Empire was virtually at peace. Some disturbances broke out in Britain, on the Rhine, and along the Danube, and troubles likewise with the Moors in North Africa. There was a rebellion among the Jews, and a revolt in Egypt. But, on the whole, peace flourished, and the many peoples within the Empire enjoyed the blessings of law and order. After the revolt in Egypt, the Emperor visited that province and made a tour in Syria and Asia Minor; and it is likely that Marcus accompanied him. Except for these travels, and his summer holidays, Marcus seems to have lived in Rome, gradually disciplining himself and learning what was needful in order to take the responsibility of Empire upon his shoulders. The time for that responsibility came in the beginning of the year 161. Antoninus died at his country place in Lorium; he was then

seventy-four years old. His health had begun to fail, and a change for the worse warned him of a quickly approaching end. He committed the State and his daughter to the care of Marcus Aurelius, bade that the golden statue of Fortune, which always stood in the bedchamber of the reigning Emperor, be carried into Marcus's room, and gave out to the officer on guard the watchword *"Aequanimitas."* Then, for the first time, in his delirious moments, he revealed how much anxious thought had been hidden under that calm exterior, for he rambled on about matters of state and expressed indignation against the Barbarian chiefs who harried the Roman borders. But at the last he became quiet and gently fell asleep.

He left behind him a reputation, such as only that of George Washington can rival. When Hadrian adopted him as his son and successor, he presented him to the Senate, saying, "He is noble, mild, reasonable, and sagacious." Hadrian's opinion has been adopted by history. Soon afterwards, the Senate, reading aright the new Emperor's character, conferred upon him the title *Pius*, the epithet chosen by Virgil for the hero of his epic on the founding of Rome, which means that he to whom the adjective belongs fulfills all his duties toward God and man. And a historian of the fourth century sums up Antoninus's character in these words, *nulli acerbus cunctis benignus*, which may be translated by the famous phrase "with malice toward none, with charity for all"; but perhaps the eulogy which he himself would have liked best is that of Dio Cassius, expressed in the words which Socrates employed to designate an upright and honorable gentleman, *καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός*.

CHAPTER XI

LUCIUS VERUS AND THE PARTHIAN WAR

AFTER Antoninus died, all that could be done to express admiration, veneration, and sorrow, was done by Marcus and the Senate. His ashes were laid in the Mausoleum of Hadrian, and the temple, that had been built hard by the Roman Forum in honor of his wife, was dedicated to them both. The legend, *Divo Antonino et Divae Faustinae,* carved in stately Roman letters, is still to be read upon the architrave.

Marcus Aurelius was now Emperor. His body was frail, his mind inclined by nature to philosophy and literature, his spirit religious; his tastes and temper of themselves would have led him to a life of ease and pleasantness, to the enjoyment of books, of friendship and family affections, of country pleasures and undisturbed quiet, but untoward circumstances called upon him "to take up arms against a sea of troubles," and he devoted his life to the fulfillment of arduous duty. It is his fortitude, self-sacrifice, and success that commend his philosophy to the strong and the confident, as much as his religious-mindedness commends it to the despondent and the hungry-hearted. The reign of Antoninus had been quiet, but in the reign of Marcus, it seemed as if the anger of heaven had been let loose. Floods, famine, war, rebellion, and pestilence, descended upon the Roman people.

The new Emperor's first act was to associate with himself in the government of the Empire, his adopted brother,

Lucius Verus. That he did so has been made one of the chief criticisms against him; it, therefore, becomes pertinent to justify the act. The critics say that Lucius Verus was a mere debauchee, and that to make him joint Emperor was folly, or worse. Let us examine the circumstances, and such sources of information as we have. Hadrian, no mean judge of men, had chosen the elder Verus as his successor, and after Verus's death, had grafted upon the adoption of Antoninus Pius the condition that he should adopt Verus's son. Antoninus Pius did so, and brought him up in his household; and, although he appointed young Lucius quaestor and also made him consul, it is true that he never entrusted him with an active share in the government. And, if this seems to be a passing over of Verus, it is to be remembered that Verus was forty-five years younger than his imperial Father, and but seven years old when adopted; and, therefore, it was natural that Antoninus should always have regarded him as a child, and, the more so, because he had by his side a much older son, intelligent and faithful to a rare degree. There is nothing to show that Antoninus wished to debar Lucius Verus from the throne or to restrict Marcus Aurelius in any way from adopting him as associate; and it seems likely, in view of the promptitude of the investiture, that their joint rule had been predetermined between the two brothers. If precedents on all fours were lacking, nevertheless the double head was an innovation in title rather than in actual authority; Vespasian had associated his son Titus with him in the government of the Empire, and Nerva had done very much the same for Trajan. And, quite apart from the logical compulsion of the situation, there was a controlling reason for taking Lucius as co-emperor. Marcus was by nature a man of books and such company "as is quiet, wise and good," and, though highly trained in civil administration, he had had no experience in the art of war, beyond such as every young Roman noble received. He

needed a partner better qualified for military affairs than himself, and undoubtedly had this in mind when he decided to confer the imperial dignity upon Lucius Verus. His choice was put to proof almost at once.

The Parthians, whose empire lay to the east of the Tigris, had been making preparations for war during the reign of Antoninus, and, on his death, believing that their opportunity for a successful invasion had come, now that a pale scholar sat upon the Roman throne, crossed the Tigris into the debateable land between that river and the Euphrates, which region was at that time within the Roman sphere of influence. Here they attacked and defeated a Roman army which had been hurriedly sent to oppose them, and not only overran Mesopotamia, but invaded the Roman province of Syria, and caused such a panic that the Roman governor ran away.

The Emperor Marcus, no doubt after consultation with his most experienced counsellors, as was his practice, decided upon a plan of action. He, himself, should stay at Rome, where there was much need of his presence, for, in addition to the unusual business incidental to a new reign, the Tiber, overflowing its banks, had wrought great destruction, and famine had followed hard upon the flood; Lucius Verus should go to Antioch, in titular command of the army of the East, take charge of supplies, and make all the preparations necessary for a vigorous prosecution of the war, while experienced generals, Avidius Cassius, Statius Priscus, and Martius Verus should lead the legions in the field. Accordingly, Lucius set out from Rome, got as far as Canosa and there fell ill; he was soon able to continue his journey, but travelled slowly, very likely on account of his recent illness. He went by way of Athens, where he was the guest of Herodes Atticus, and at last reached Antioch (163). It is at this point that the scandalmongers who wrote his biography begin their attacks upon him. Of his boyhood they can find

nothing worse to say than that he was always fond of pleasure, full of animal spirits, devoted to games and jollity. He liked hunting, wrestling, and all athletic sports; and grew up into a handsome young man, of exceptionally good manners. He was very fond of his tutors, and they were very fond of him; the tie between him and Fronto seems to have been almost as close and affectionate as that between Marcus and Fronto. When Fronto became old and feeble, Lucius would help him to his feet, give him an arm, almost carry him, and even greet him with a kiss, when he could do so in private without exciting the jealousy of the courtiers. Altogether Lucius Verus, like his father, was a very charming person, and, at the same time (though I cannot say just what gives me this impression), very much of a *grand seigneur*. Doubtless he had the traits of a southern temperament and liked to amuse himself; he was a regular attendant at the games and shows. And yet (these same biographers report), Antoninus liked "the simplicity of his character and the purity of his life." Therefore, since his debauchery (as the accusers themselves say) did not begin until he arrived at Antioch, the sole blame to be imputed to Marcus Aurelius is that he lacked insight to discover Lucius's real character.

It is unnecessary to recount all the grossness and lewdness that the scandalmongers charge him with. Let it suffice that they compare him, for profligacy and personal vanity, to Nero, and assert that he debauched his mother-in-law and his sister-in-law, and plotted to murder Marcus, and they add the story (with the caution, indeed, that they do not believe it) that instead of Lucius's murdering Marcus, Marcus murdered Lucius by helping him to the poisoned half of a chicken. The story of would-be murder and of poisoning was already abroad within fifty years, but the charges of debauchery proceed from chroniclers of the fourth century, who, as I have said, in compiling their biographies, jumbled

together records made in earlier times. Where they went muckraking, nobody knows. This much is probably true; that Lucius Verus was all too ready to adopt the loose morality of fashionable society in Antioch.

In those days Antioch enjoyed the reputation, such as Paris has had in our own time, of being the gay capital, where pleasure and revelry wear their gaudiest livery. And a great part of this reputation was due to a suburb, a few miles from the city, where stood a temple sacred to Apollo. Here I quote Gibbon: "At a distance of five miles from Antioch the Macedonian kings of Syria had consecrated to Apollo one of the most elegant places of devotion in the pagan world. A magnificent temple rose in honor of the god of light; and his colossal figure almost filled the capacious sanctuary, which was enriched with gold and gems, and adorned by the skill of the Grecian artists. The deity was represented in a bending attitude, with a golden cup in his hand, pouring out a libation on the earth; as if he supplicated the venerable mother, to give to his arms the cold and beauteous Daphne; for the spot was ennobled by fiction; and the fancy of the Syrian poets had transported the amorous tale from the banks of the Peneus to those of the Orontes. . . . The perpetual resort of pilgrims and spectators, insensibly formed, in the neighborhood of the temple, the stately and populous village of Daphne, which emulated the splendour, without acquiring the title, of a provincial city. The temple and the village were deeply bosomed in a thick grove of laurels and cypresses, which reached as far as a circumference of ten miles and formed in the most sultry summers a cool and impenetrable shade. A thousand streams of the purest water issuing from every hill, preserved the verdure of the earth, and the temperature of the air; the senses were gratified with harmonious sounds and aromatic odours; and the peaceful grove was consecrated to health and joy, to luxury and love. The vigorous youth

pursued, like Apollo, the object of his desires; and the blushing maid was warned, by the fate of Daphne, to shun the folly of unseasonable coyness. The soldier and the philosopher wisely avoided the temptation of this sensual paradise; where pleasure, assuming the character of religion, imperceptibly dissolved the firmness of manly virtue."

These blandishments had already exerted a disastrous influence upon the Roman camp stationed hard by, and they must have sung a siren song to young Lucius Verus. He had passed his life, up to the age of thirty, in the simple, virtuous, monotonous, society of the imperial household, in the daily presence of the Emperor, and under the affectionate but clear-sighted eyes of his austere brother, and now, on a sudden, he found himself half master of the world, flattered, courted, obeyed, far from domestic responsibility, and in the most licentious and delightful city in the Empire. His fall to the fascination of pleasure might well be excused. But his transgression, measured by the standard of princes, seems to have been very light. Indeed it would not have aroused even the faintest criticism at the time. His offence seems to be no more than this: On his accession, Lucius had been betrothed to Marcus's daughter Lucilla, a girl probably not more than twelve or thirteen and still too young to marry; but in the East he forgot Lucilla completely and fell in love with a very beautiful Greek lady who came from Ephesus, Panthea by name. But so far was she from being an evil companion, (at least if Lucian is to be believed,) that, although her beauty was equal at every point to the most exquisite statues by Phidias or Praxiteles, her virtues and accomplishments were still more beautiful and admirable. According to a fellow citizen who knew her well, this lady was comparable, in mind and character, to Aspasia, Sappho, or Nausicaa, or to that Panthea in the *Cyropaedia* (VI, 4, 4) who said to her husband, when he went to battle, "Abradatas, if ever a woman loved her hus-

band more than her own life, I think you know that I am such a one."

It seems hardly credible that with such companionship, Lucius's dissipations could have been gross; and yet that companionship may well have given alarm to a prudent mother-in-law to be, and it is not surprising to learn that Lucilla, and later Faustina, came travelling eastward, and that Lucilla and Lucius were promptly married, probably at Ephesus (164). Neither is it credible that Lucius, living with his young wife, with his mother-in-law the Empress Faustina, and, in a year or two, with babies, would have behaved himself as the scandalmongers say. But I will proceed to give the direct evidence in his favor.

Long after Lucius's death, Marcus, in the note-book meant for no eye but his own, recorded his gratitude, "Because it has been my good fortune to have such a brother, able by his character to arouse me to a close watch upon myself, and at the same time, cheering me by his respect and affection." And in the dialogue, *The Portraits,* (that I have quoted,) Lucian makes one of his dramatis personae speak of Verus as "the great, good, and gentle" Emperor, and say that it was fitting that he should have the love of such a perfect woman as Panthea. Likewise Aelius Aristides, in an oration entitled the *Panegyric on Cyzicus,* not only suggests no difference between Marcus and Verus, but harps upon their similarity. "They have proved the maxim that friends possess all things in common [he says]; . . . they have made their dominion the symbol of perfect justice, as if they had taken up public affairs in order that they might be joint teachers of virtue to all men; . . . though twain, they have set up a wonderful monarchy, one soul in two bodies and two minds, like harmonious music when all the chords are struck. . . . Homer says:

> Proud is the heart of heaven-fostered Kings,

yet, neither an overweening spirit, nor an extravagant pride, is their sign of kingship, but, on the contrary, the very utmost of high-mindedness and love for men, which shows, in very truth, that their education was divine; . . . toward other princes subjects entertain a sense of fear, but the vows and prayers made for them proceed straight from the heart." There was no need for Aristides to insist upon this identity of character, unless he believed it to be true. And the correspondence between Fronto and Verus, which continued during the whole time of the latter's stay in Antioch, contradicts, as flatly as indirect evidence can, the gross stories of debauchery. Fronto's letters are full of respect, as well as of affection. In one, he commends to Verus's notice a young friend of his, in these terms: "No man is more dutiful, temperate, or modest. He possesses simplicity, purity, truth, a genuine Roman trustworthiness, and *la tendresse d'un amant,* which I hardly take to be a Roman quality." Would it have been possible to praise such qualities to a man living in notorious riot? Lucius's own letters, as well, are strong witnesses on his own behalf. For instance:

Lucius Verus to Fronto

Antioch (?), 165.

My dear Master:

I am ashamed. Please forgive me, that entangled in urgent business and trusting in your easy-going kindness toward me, I have given precedence to what I had to do, and have omitted to write you the while. Excuse my confidence in your affection, if I have hesitated to write about my plans—all the details would, perhaps, be changed from day to day, and the result of them was uncertain, and I quite doubtful. . . . And would you have wished me, while I was querulous and in a great hurry, to write you letters against

my will, because I thought it necessary, not because I wanted to? You may ask, Why didn't you want to? Because, at that time nothing had been accomplished that made it worth while to call on you to share in my pleasure. And, I confess, I had no desire to tell a man, of whom I am very fond, and whom I long to see always happy, of the anxieties that have rendered me very miserable day and night, and almost made me think that everything was ruined. While I was miserable over one matter, I could not find it in my heart to write of something else. Could Lucius wear a mask to Fronto, when I boast that from you I learned simple truth and true love far more than the art of oratory? . . .

VERUS.

And, finally, at the end of the campaign, Marcus Aurelius delivered a speech in the Senate concerning Lucius, full of "noble sentiment, of confidence, of affection, and of longing to see him."

And, now, lest it be suspected that this contemporary evidence may be biassed in favor of Lucius, I add the testimony of later generations. In the biography of the Emperor Alexander Severus (A. D. 222-235), it is said that the Emperor, when discussing examples of virtue, asks: "If you look for piety, where will you find it more holy than in Antoninus Pius? If for wisdom, where is greater good sense than in Marcus Aurelius? If for innocence, where is there more simplicity than in Verus?" And in the biography of Antoninus Diadumenus (A. D. 202-218) it is again said, that "the Antonines were more esteemed than the gods, for in them were consecrated the three virtues, wisdom, goodness, and piety, in Antoninus piety, in Marcus wisdom, in Verus goodness." And the Emperor Julian (A. D. 361-363), in a casual reference to Marcus and Verus, classes them together as secure from condemnation or mockery. So much for that

matter; which is mainly important as bearing on the character of the society in which Marcus lived.

Lucius Verus, having got to Antioch, found the army completely demoralized. The soldiers utterly disregarded discipline and drill, they diced, drank, and were to be found more often in Daphne than at camp. Verus, in accordance with the decisions made in Rome, set himself to the task of recruiting, of getting together military stores, of attending to the commissariat, and such matters, and assigned the immediate command of the Syrian army to Avidius Cassius. But he did not rest there, or feel that he had divested himself of all responsibility. Fronto, in what was intended to be a chapter in the history of the campaign, describes Verus's doings (and he would never have had the face to say what he does say, if Verus's detractors spoke the truth, or anything approaching the truth): "Lucius checked the plague raging in the military discipline, by setting an example of hard work. He marched at the head of his troops, more often on foot than on horseback, and supported scorching heat as easily as a temperate day; he bore with clouds of dust and the sweat of military drill, as if it were sport; he went bareheaded in sunshine, rain, hail, or snow, and exposed his unarmed body to the enemy's missiles. He inspected the troops with minute care, and used to visit the sick. He took his bath at night, after his business was despatched. His food was plain; in camp he shared the soldiers' fare, and he would drink native wine, or what water there was. He enjoyed work more than leisure; indeed he turned leisure into labor, and spent what time was free from military affairs over civil business. In nights of unexpected dearth he made his couch (and table, too) of branches and leaves, and sometimes slept on the ground. Hard work brought sleep; he did not need to go seeking for quiet. Serious offences he punished severely, but trivial breaches of discipline he pretended not to see; he

left a door open to repentance, for many men correct their own faults, if they think them unnoticed, but if they know they are found out, they assume a brazen obstinacy. . . ."

In this passage Fronto does not claim that Verus was the active commander of the Syrian army, he merely asserts that he set an admirable example, inspected the troops, as the titular commander-in-chief should, and that when he punished he used a wise discretion. There can be no question that the immediate task of bringing the disorganized army into a state of disciplined obedience fell on the shoulders of Avidius Cassius; or that it was Marcus Aurelius, acting, doubtless, in accord with the advice of his council of war, who had selected Cassius to take the direct control of the army. Letters prove this.

Marcus to the Prefect of the Commissariat

Rome (?), 163 (?).

My dear Prefect:

I gave the Syrian army to Avidius Cassius, when it was sunk in self-indulgence and leading the life of dissipation that belongs to Daphne. Caesonius Vectilianus wrote that he found all the soldiers taking hot baths. I think I made no mistake; especially, if you will remember that Cassius is a strict disciplinarian according to the Cassius tradition. Soldiers cannot be kept in obedience except by old-fashioned discipline. You know that excellent verse that everybody quotes:

> On ancient customs, and on men of antique mould,
> The Roman Empire stands.

Please provide the army with ample supplies; if I know Avidius, they will not be wasted.

Marcus, Imperator.

The Prefect to the Emperor Marcus

My Lord:

You did wisely to put Cassius in command of the Syrian army. There is nothing better for Grecianized soldiers than a very strict man. He will stop the hot baths; he will strip off the flowers from round their heads and necks and chests.

The food for the army is all ready; under a good commander nothing is lacking. There is not much to ask for or to be expended.

Prefect of the Commissariat.

Avidius Cassius was a Roman soldier of the old school, proud of his descent from the famous Cassius who had murdered Julius Caesar, and so, of being an hereditary foe to tyrants; he took for his model the rough and rugged Caius Marius, conqueror of the Cimbri and Teutones. He was a man of strong character and seeming contradictions. Sometimes he was truculent and rough, at others gentle and polite; usually religious, now and again he would mock religion; at times a great drinker, and then again wholly abstinent; fond of his dinner, and yet he would go supperless to bed without a murmur; at times a slave to women, at times a devotee to chastity. In one respect, however, he was always consistent, he was a martinet in discipline, and enforced obedience by punishments of great severity. And yet in spite of his cruelty toward soldiers who disobeyed, he was very popular with his men. On assuming command, he laid down rules suited to a state of war; he forbade the soldiers to visit the pleasure resorts of Antioch and Daphne; he banished luxury and idleness from the camp, gave the troops regular drill; and before long had the army ready to take the field. His fellow generals seem to have been equally efficient. The first success was won by Statius Priscus, who conducted the northerly campaign, invaded Armenia and took the capital (A. D. 163).

The line of advance assigned to Cassius lay to the south, through Mesopotamia, and was much more difficult; but he won several victories, and captured several cities, including Ctesiphon, and from there he proceeded as far as Babylon in the kingdom of Medea. The Parthians were brought to their knees (A. D. 165). These campaigns, if not brilliant, were worthy of the Roman name. The Emperor Verus, as commander-in-chief, won great renown, and returned to Rome to celebrate his triumph (A. D. 166). Avidius Cassius does not seem to have regarded himself as defrauded of any laurels due him; at least, at a later time, when he raised a rebellion and expressed his dissatisfaction with the existing government, he did not complain of any such injustice. For his reward, he was made commander of all the Roman provinces in Asia. On the occasion of these victories, a characteristic trait of Marcus showed itself. The Senate decreed special honors to both Emperors; but Marcus refused to accept his part, on the ground that all the honor was due to Verus, until Verus's urgent solicitations induced him to yield. Finally, both shared the victorious titles and the triumph. But, again, after Verus's death, Marcus dropped the titles he had shared, and left them solely to grace Verus's memory.

CHAPTER XII

THE EMPEROR MARCUS AT ROME

THE Parthian war ended happily, but other and greater evils followed in quick succession. Before narrating these, I will quote again from the correspondence between Marcus Aurelius and his old friend Fronto. The two seem to have come together again, after the temporary estrangement, if that be not too strong a word, caused by the intrusion of philosophy, and to have gone back, Fronto with zeal and the Emperor sympathetically, to their old topic, rhetoric. This is the last happy period of the Emperor's life; for with the plague and the war against the Teutonic Barbarians, the shades of night begin to close in about him.

The Emperor Marcus to Fronto

Lanuvium (?), 161.

MY DEAR MASTER:

. . . I read a little of Coelius and of an oration of Cicero's, but by stealth as it were, and certainly in a hurry, one piece of business so presses on another's heels. The only repose is to pick up a book in the interim. Our little girls are staying with [their great-great-aunt] Matidia at present in the town [Minturnae (?)]; they can't come often to me in the evening because the air is too vigorous here.

Good-bye, my honored Master.

MARCUS, IMPERATOR.

[P.S.] The Lord my Brother, my daughters, and their mother send you their love. Send something that you think

very eloquent for me to read, something of yours, or Cato's, or Cicero, or Sallust, or Gracchus, or some poet, *j'ai besoin de repos,* and especially of that kind, some book that will pick me up and rescue me from *ces chagrins qui me poursuivent.* Or if you have some bits of Lucretius or Ennius, *quelque chose d'harmonieux et de bon sens,* something as it were *qui montre un cachet moral.*

In answer, or at least about this time, Fronto sends the Emperor some of his old speeches, including the eulogy upon Antoninus Pius which he had delivered in the Senate nearly twenty years before. The Emperor writes back how much he admires them; thereupon Fronto thanks him, and says that he is not surprised that he likes the eulogy, for had a Parthian or an Iberian praised Antoninus Pius in their own languages, he would have judged them wonderful orators. "It is not my oration, but your Father's virtue that you admire; you praise not the words of him that praises, but the deeds of him that is praised. And about what I said in your praise that same day in the Senate, I want you to feel this: then you possessed a rare nature, now the noblest character; the harvest was then in the blade, now it has come to perfect ripeness and is gathered into the granary. Then I lived in hope, now in possession. Expectation has passed into reality."

The Emperor Marcus to Fronto

Lanuvium (?), 161.

Dear Master:

Even while I was enjoying the pure air of the country, I felt something important was lacking,—that I should have news of how you are. Supply that lack, in heaven's name I beg. But our life in the country is spent in *les affaires du gouvernement;* it's a regular down-town life. What can you expect? I hardly have time enough to write

this note, business is so pressing; it takes a portion of the night to dispose of it.

Good-bye, my very agreeable Master.

MARCUS, IMPERATOR.

[P.S.] If you happen to have a selection of Cicero's letters, the whole or passages, please send them to me, or tell me which you think I had better read to cultivate my colloquial style.

Fronto to the Emperor Marcus

Rome (?), 161 (?).

MY DEAR LORD:

This is the fifth day since I was seized with pain in all my body, especially in my neck and loins. I remember that I made extracts from Cicero's letters, wherever there was a discussion of oratory, philosophy, or politics; and I also made extracts of any passage that I thought was specially well expressed or contained some happy phrase. I have sent you what extracts I had by me ready to use. Please have those books copied, (the two to Brutus, and one to Axius,) if you think it worth while; and send them to me, for I have no other copies of those extracts. But in my opinion all of Cicero's letters should be read, even more than all the orations. There is nothing more perfect than Cicero's letters.

FRONTO.

There are gaps between the letters and in the letters themselves, but such parts of the correspondence as have been preserved show that there still existed between the two men the same mutual affection as of old, with no variation except that Marcus's mind is circling in a larger orbit, and that Fronto is as full of pride and paternal solicitude for the laborious Emperor as he was for the studious boy.

And, now and again, we get a glimpse of the Emperor's life, as if we suddenly passed a chink in a great wall and could peek into the court within. For instance, there is one such glimpse of his life in the country. It was the fashion among the rich Romans to go in hot weather to some sea-shore place, Alsium or Centumcellae on the Aurelian Way, or Ostia at the Tiber's mouth, or Lavinium or Antium, a little to the south, the furthest of them not more than thirty or forty miles from Rome; or, further away to Minturnae or Sinuessa, at the very southern extremity of Latium. Life at these places was a round of recreations and amusements, simple or extravagant, according to the taste of the visitors. Some bathed, or walked along the beach, or went sailing, or merely lounged about to enjoy the beauty of the sky and sea, the freshness of the breeze, and listen to the songs of the sailors and fishermen, and all the pleasant sea noises, hauling sails, keels scraping on the sand, and so forth; others, retiring to a more secluded spot away from the beach, watched the long marsh grasses, where the frogs trolled their eternal chorus. For many persons dinner was the great event, with its dishes of oysters, mussels, and fishes of all sorts, some caught in the sea, some fattened in the fishponds, followed by fruits, confectionery, pastry, and amply accompanied by wines, served in prodigal crystal cups, and by all the luxurious gourmandism of Rome. All this was particularly true of Alsium, and had been so for generations; even in Plautus's day it was a "voluptuous resort," and pleasure lovers, people of the fashionable world, went there to have a good time; and usually they did so with a vengeance. But it was also possible to live apart from the gay crowd, and enjoy the cool breezes and the charms of nature by oneself, with no company other than a book. Marcus would have been likely to take down some classic with him, Plautus, Accius, Lucretius, or Ennius, and Cicero certainly. Such a quiet holiday of rest, of reading and

loafing, is probably what he had in mind when he went there on this occasion; but a conscientious master of the world was not master of his own time.

The Emperor Marcus to Fronto

Lorium, 161 (?).

DEAR MASTER:

I am not going to tell you how we spent our holidays at Alsium, for fear lest you be angry and scold me. When I got back to Lorium, I found my little lady with a touch of fever. The doctor says [it is nothing(?)] and if you, too, are well, I shall be very happy.

Good-bye, dear Master.

MARCUS, IMPERATOR.

Fronto writes back with all the solicitous anxiety of an old nurse, mixing irony, scolding, and entreaties all together. He asks why Marcus went to Alsium, where, it is said, the very sea, at the season when the halcyon builds its nest, celebrates a tranquil holiday? Is the halcyon with its fledglings more in need of quiet and rest than the Emperor and his children? Apollo's bow is not always bent; the lute strings are not always stretched; a garden, to produce its best of flowers and vegetables, needs to be enriched; and a field that shall bring forth a golden harvest, must lie fallow for a time. And he begs the Emperor, even if he has declared war on leisure, recreation, and amusement, at least to observe the boundaries between day and night and to sleep enough. It makes a touching picture of this old man who, with his mixture of rhetoric, of solicitude, of foolishness and great good sense, of noble and of worldly standards, of officious zeal and true affection, reminds one in his later years very much of Polonius. It is pleasant to find the Emperor always the same affectionate, respectful, pupil.

The Emperor Marcus to Fronto

Lorium, April 27 (?), 162.

DEAR MASTER:

Happy New Year, good health, good luck! This is my prayer to the gods on your birthday (a fête day for me). And I expect to have my prayer granted; for I do but commend to the kindness of the gods a man whom they must judge worthy of their beneficence, and would help of their own accord. And on this fête day, when you count up the things that make you happy, please include in your reckoning those who love you greatly; and in the very front rank please put this pupil of yours, and, next, my Lord and Brother, *car il est plein de sympathie pour ceux qui t'aiment.* God be with you, Best of Masters, and may you for many years be blest with good health, and rejoice in the safe preservation of your daughter, your grandchildren and your son-in-law. My dear [Nostra] Faustina is getting back her strength, and our chick Antoninus's cough is more relaxed. And everyone in our little nest prays for you as best they know how. Again, and over again, God be with you, my most delightful Master, and for a long old age.

I ask a favor of you—please let it be granted—do not take the trouble to come to Lorium for Cornificia's birthday. Please God, you shall see us at Rome in a few days. But, if you love me, rest quiet the evening and night after your birthday, without a thought that anything has to be done. Grant this to your friend Antoninus, who asks you with very genuine insistence.

MARCUS, IMPERATOR.

This evidence of affection starts the old man's rhetorical eloquence, and he writes long, loving letters in which the eulogy is of such transparent honesty that it commends both the writer and the object of the panegyrics, which are sometimes piled like Pelion on Ossa, to the sympathy of those

who read them. He delights to call up images of Marcus's gracious youth, when his rare qualities were in the seed, the leaf, the blossom, and carry on the metaphor to the ripe fruit; or again he compares his youth to the first glimmer of morning destined to mount into the calm splendor of mid-day; and emphasizes the difference between himself and the foolish nurse who loves the little boy best, and is petulant and angry when she is obliged to hand him over to the pedagogue, whereas his love and admiration and joy have grown with his pupil's growth and achievements. And he likes to dwell on Marcus's filial conduct, his devotion to Antoninus Pius, how he always adapted himself and his habits to his Father's convenience, how he stayed at his bedside when he was ill, and would not leave him, even for the bath or for his food. But all this will appear better if I quote from one of the letters.

Fronto to the Emperor Marcus

Rome (?), April 28 (?), 162.

My Emperor:

To this old man, your Master, as you call him, you wish health, a Happy New Year, good luck, and all good things. And you write that you prayed to the gods for these things for me on my birthday, which you say is a "fête day" for you. Well, Antoninus, my heart's sweetness, all those good wishes for me depend upon your Brother and yourself. Since I have known you two, and put my fortunes in your hands, I have never esteemed anything sweeter than you, nor shall I ever, even should I live on from now as many years as I have lived already. And therefore, all of us, in our united prayers, pray to the gods for one thing only, that you may live long in health, and prosperity, and power, for the good of the State, and of your family. Nor is there any boon besides that I desire so much to receive from the

gods, or from Fortune, or from you yourselves, as the pleasure of seeing you both and talking to you, and of getting your most delightful letters as long as may be granted me; and for the sake of that, if it were possible, I choose to become a boy again.

As for other things, I have lived long enough. I behold you, Antoninus, an Emperor as excellent as I hoped; as just, as free from wrongdoing as I was confident you would be; as popular and dear to the Roman People as I wished; as affectionate toward me as I desired; and as eloquent as you yourself desired. For as soon as you turned your mind again to oratory, the fact that you had forsaken it made no difference. I see you becoming day by day even more eloquent, and I rejoice as if I were still your master. For, although I love and delight in all your good qualities, (I speak of you both,) nevertheless I admit that I derive an especial personal pleasure from your eloquence. I am just like parents who recognize their own lineaments in the faces of their children, when I perceive traces of my instruction in your speeches—

Latone dans son cœur la mère a tressailli de joie.

My own words cannot express the depth of my delight. And do not you, Antoninus, be pained or troubled in the least, by the memory that you have not always been devoted to the art of eloquence. For this is true, that if a man of great natural intelligence has been taught and trained in the art of eloquence from the very beginning in the right way, although he may play truant for a time or give it up, as soon as he decides to start again and go on, he will reach the end of his journey, possibly by a little different way, but none the less he will reach it. . . . And, take my word, of all the men I have known I have never found anyone gifted with a mind of more productive fertility than yours. I used to have great argument about this with our dear friend

Victorinus, and swear I was right, and I would vex him mightily when I told him that he could never hope to attain the beauty of your intellect. At that time, too, my old Roman Rusticus, who would gladly have sacrificed his life to save your little finger nail, was nevertheless very reluctant to concede your ten talents, and was cross about it too.

You had one danger, Antoninus, like all men of very fine mind, lest your thoughts be hampered by lack of copiousness and beauty of language; for the larger the thought, the greater the difficulty to clothe it in words. It is no slight labor to see that noble thoughts are not ill clad,—neither slovenly nor left half naked. Do you remember the speech which you delivered in the Senate when you were hardly more than a boy? In it, to make your image fit your subject, you used the simile of a husk, and you were considerably troubled lest you had employed a metaphor not suitable to the place or to the rank of the audience, and I wrote you my first longish letter, in which (and it was true) I prophesied that it was a sign of great intelligence to lay hold boldly of perilous expressions of that kind, but that it would be necessary for you to apply yourself with diligence, and not without help from masters of rhetoric, in order to present your thought in all its brilliancy. Now you see that you have attained . . .

I have been induced to write all this because of your last letter, in which you wrote that all that you had learned was gradually fading away; to me, on the contrary, all that you have learned seems to be growing more mature and bursting into flower. Do you appreciate, sufficiently, how eagerly, and with what applause and real pleasure, the Senate and the people listen to you? And I am ready to go bail, that the oftener they hear you, the more warmly they like you; the charms of your mind, of your appearance, of your voice and your eloquence, are so many and delightful. . . .

As you wished, my Lord, and as my health required, I

stayed at home, and said my prayers for you, that in great happiness you may celebrate many birthdays of your children. Our little fellow's coughing will moderate when the weather becomes more placid, and his nurse too, that is if she will eat the food she ought, for all cures, all remedies for healing a child's throat, are contained in the nurse's milk. I, too, am bothered by a trifling cold; and a pain in my right hand, though it is not very bad, has prevented me from writing a longer letter; that is why I have dictated this.

FRONTO.

In another letter the old man describes a visit to Lorium; the dozen miles of rattling over the pavement of the Via Aurelia, excellent as it was, made the expedition a matter of some circumstance.

Fronto to the Emperor Marcus

Rome (?), 168.

MY LORD AND EMPEROR:

I have seen your little bantams—the pleasantest sight I have ever seen in all my life—they look so exactly like you that no two things could have a closer resemblance. It most certainly recompensed me for my journey to Lorium, over the slippery road and up those steep hills; for I not only saw you before me, but doubled, whether I turned to the right or the left. The gods have granted them a good color and stout lungs. One of them was holding a piece of very white bread, like a little prince, the other a bit of brown bread, showing plainly he was the son of a philosopher. I pray the gods to bless the husbandman, to bless the crop, and to bless the plant that bringeth forth such wonderful copies. And as I was listening to their little voices, that were so sweet and so charming, in some queer way I even recognized in those little pipings the dulcet, flowing, sounds

of your speech. So, now, unless you take care, you will find me somewhat more proud, for I have others to love in your stead, not only with my eyes but with my ears too.

FRONTO.

The Emperor Marcus to Fronto

MY DEAR MASTER:

I saw my little boys, when you saw them; and I saw you, too, as I read your letter. I beg you to continue to love me as you do; continue to love me in just the way you love those children of mine: . . . and continue to love me just as you have loved me. The extraordinary pleasure I get from your letter causes me to write in this way.

What shall I say of the elegance of your style? Unless, that you speak Latin, whereas the rest of us speak neither Greek nor Latin. I beg you to write often to my royal Brother; he is very eager to have me obtain this boon from you, and his extreme desires make me importunate and pressing.

Good-bye, most delightful Master. Salutations to your grandson.

MARCUS, IMPERATOR.

The general conception of a historical personage, I mean the image of him that rises to the mind on reading his letters, his meditations, or the remarks that his friends and neighbors have made concerning him, is fashioned very much in the same general way as our notions of a contemporary. We get from little things, from some action, some speech, some thought of his, a very definite and sharply impressed feeling, that we might not be able to explain or justify to another person, of what his character is. Something in the act, word, or thought itself, or in its manner of delivery, or in the effect upon the men whom it immediately concerns, seems to act as a key to the cipher and

reveal the whole story of what the man is. And so these letters of Marcus Aurelius, with what they tell and what they conceal, leave a very distinct impression of character and especially in one particular. Here is a very finished and noble gentleman. As I say, such an impression, even when, as with Marcus Aurelius, it deepens to conviction, is the consequence of a sum of little touches, or possibly an inference from many (or even a few) random bits of information. Marcus Aurelius was uniformly merciful, kind, and sympathetic; he never displayed, except where it seemed for another's good, a consciousness that he was master with power to do as he willed; rather he carefully maintained the appearance of complete equality, *par inter pares,* accompanied by the deference that youth owes to age; he was critical of self, generous in praise, and niggard of blame; he was studious of self-effacement, eager to set others at their ease, full of *fides et religio,* honorable toward men and dutiful to the gods; he was punctilious in all his family relations, *sanctus,* as Fronto says, to his wife. He was courteous to everybody, and it was this universal courtesy, testifying as it does to his pure and blameless heart, that endeared him to his people, and has made his name the synonym for virtue on the throne. He was cultivated, scholarly almost, a patron of things of the mind and a friend to the servants of intellectual interests. His statues show how careful he was, in spite of his Stoical indifference concerning ornaments and outward things, of his dress and personal appearance, especially on public occasions when he had some priestly function to fulfill. All these qualities, I take it, make a part of what is usually meant by the epithet *gentleman.* And there is one other trait, fitting in with those I have enumerated, that deserves especial mention, for it is highly characteristic, and, though (as it seems to me) praiseworthy, has given occasion to misconstruction and faultfinding. I refer to his personal and offi-

cial deference to the religious beliefs, superstitions, and practices of his subjects. The meagre biographer, the muck-raking Julius Capitolinus, reports that, when Marcus set off for his northern wars against the Barbarians, he summoned priests from all over, and performed foreign rites and religious ceremonies of all kinds for the purification of Rome, and in particular celebrated the solemn festival of the lectisternium for seven days. This is cited as evidence that Marcus was superstitious. It is also reported that before leaving Rome he took the spear kept in the temple of Bellona, dipped its point in blood, and hurled it in the direction of the enemy; and further that an Egyptian soothsayer accompanied the army, and that Chaldaean priests were there, also. And, finally, the critics cite a passage from Lucian's satire on a false prophet, which says that when Marcus was engaged in a campaign against the Barbarians, this false prophet sent some oracular verses to say that the Romans would conquer if they would throw into the Danube two lions, also spices and flowers; and that the oracle was obeyed. The Barbarians thought these animals were dogs or wolves and clubbed them to death. What they would have done, had they known they were lions, Lucian does not say. This story, if there is any truth in it, seems to apply to a time before Marcus Aurelius was in personal command of the army, and in itself is too vague and foolish to base an inference upon, other than that Lucian believed that his readers were gullible. The other actions attributed to the Emperor were done out of compliance with the wishes of his people. What with the Parthians to the east, the Barbarians to the north, plague and famine in among them, the Roman people were well-nigh panic-stricken, and all the uneducated, no doubt, were frantic in their desire for the performance of all rites pertaining to the national religion; and it was incumbent upon the Emperor in his priestly character to perform them. It is conceivable that a king of

England might be of a skeptical mind and of no religious faith, and yet as head of the Anglican Church most assuredly he would sanction and attend all the stately ceremonies that, according to custom, take place at Westminster Abbey or St. Paul's Cathedral, in time of war or of other national calamity.

Foreign rites had long been permitted in Rome. Magna Mater, Isis, Serapis, and other gods from the East, were worshipped by many inhabitants both immigrant and native, and were held in great reverence by the ladies of the imperial family. A temple to Magna Mater stood beside the imperial palace on the Palatine Hill, one temple to Isis stood where S. Maria sopra Minerva now stands, a second between the Caelian and Esquiline hills, and shrines to foreign deities were here and there, all over the city. It would not only have been impolitic, at a time when the nation was called on to make a great and united effort, but it would have been unkind and scornful to a high degree, almost cruel, if the Emperor had refused to perform the rites and ceremonies that so many deemed of the utmost consequence to their safety. This scrupulous observance of their belief and convictions, bears witness to his breadth of mind, his tolerance, his sympathy, and also, as it seems to me, to his character as a gentleman. That he was not superstitious is borne out, I think, by every line in his note-book.

CHAPTER XIII

THE PLAGUE AND THE BARBARIAN WAR

ON the return of Lucius Verus (A. D. 166), the imperial brothers celebrated a triumph, but the joy of victory was short-lived, for the soldiers brought back from Syria the plague, in its most dreadful form. It had been caught, so the story went, after some mysterious fashion, in the purlieus of Babylon; and Parthia conquered wrought far more havoc than Parthia victorious. Death stalked home with the soldiers all the way. The government, in its great need of troops, had fetched soldiers from many garrisons in different parts of the Empire, and, as a consequence, when the various detachments returned to their posts, contagion was carried far and wide. The soldiers suffered worst; crowded in camps they infected one another, and of such as did not die great numbers were left enfeebled and languid. The civil population was affected hardly less. From the borders of Parthia to the Rhine, even in Gaul, people sickened and died by tens of thousands. Ancient historians reckoned that but half the people survived; and modern scholarship has regarded this plague as one of the chief factors in the swift decline of the Empire. All Italy was stricken; it seems likely that our friend Fronto was among the victims. And in the midst of the plague, the Barbarians burst down from the north, across the Rhine and the Danube. In the great drama of strife between the Roman people and the Teutonic tribes, which had occupied the stage of Europe so much of the time from the days of Caius Marius, the curtain rose, as it were, upon the first

scene of the last act. The brunt of the attack fell on the provinces along the upper reaches of the Danube. The defences were weak; for when the troops were hurried away to withstand the Parthian invasion, this long frontier had been left too thinly garrisoned, and the Barbarians swept across without difficulty. The invaders of Noricum and Pannonia were Teutonic tribes, of which the Marcomanni and the Quadi were the most powerful; somewhat later, and more to the east, the Jazyges, and other outlandish nations, Sarmatians and Scythians, joined in the attack. During the Parthian war the raiding had begun, but by means of bribes and tribute the Romans had managed to put off the serious invasion; now, however, it came down in all its fury, like a spring freshet. The order of events is not clear, and I shall not endeavor to observe a strict chronology, where time is not of importance to the story. According to likelihood, it was at this time, in the year 166, that the Barbarians defeated a Roman general, with the slaughter of twenty thousand of his men, overran the Roman provinces to the south of the Danube, sacked and ravaged, and carried virtually the whole population into captivity. And at some period of the war, at this time or later, a Barbarian army actually crossed the Alps, invaded Italy, and laid siege to Aquileia. No wonder that the Romans regarded this as a crisis in their history.

The Emperor Marcus rose to the need. He set an example of thrift and self-denial, by selling at public auction the rich vessels and ornaments of the imperial palace, cups and dishes of gold and crystal, silks and embroideries that belonged to the Empress, jewels collected by the virtuoso Hadrian, also paintings and sculptures done by the most renowned artists. This auction, which took place in Trajan's forum, lasted for weeks, and seems to have left a vivid impression upon the beholders. It must have been a brilliant and animated scene. Money was hard to raise, but a much

more difficult task was to fill up the depleted ranks of the army. To do this Marcus Aurelius set aside Roman traditions that had not been violated since the days of Hannibal; he impressed gladiators from the amphitheatre, constabulary from Asia Minor, brigands from Dalmatia, fighting men from friendly tribes along the border, and even slaves. When he enlisted the gladiators, the wits said that his purpose was to divert the Romans to philosophy. And these public duties were punctually performed in the midst of private sorrow, for his little seven-year-old boy, Annius Verus, died. When arrangements had been completed, the two Emperors set out for the seat of war. The enemy, in alarm, retreated precipitously.

The Quadi begged for peace, and in token of submission asked the Roman Emperors to confirm their newly elected king. Marcus, had no great confidence in their professions of repentance, and continued his northward march until it seemed certain that he had done all that was necessary for the future security of the Roman borders; and then, at a recrudescence of the plague, the two Emperors started back for Rome. Lucius Verus, whose reported opposition to the march northward, if true, must have been due, I think, to poor health, was suddenly taken very ill, and died on the way, at Altinum. The chroniclers (as an alternative to the story of poison) say that he died of apoplexy, but it seems not unlikely that he may have caught the plague, which was already raging with great fury at Aquileia. Marcus carried his brother's body to Rome, and laid it in the Mausoleum of Hadrian, where he had already laid the ashes of two of his own sons.

In the meantime this new outbreak of the plague had wrought such destruction among the Roman soldiers, compelling them to retreat, and extorting from them other signs of weakness, that the Barbarians, bolder than ever, renewed their attacks, and the fruits of the last campaign were all

lost. Marcus was obliged to hurry back to the front (A. D. 169). From this time almost the whole of his life was passed on the northern borders, in what is now, or was recently, Austria and Hungary. It was there that he wrote his notebook. His precepts and self-exhortations are noble in themselves, but they have received from the ten, long, patient, uncomplaining years, in which he put them to daily practice, an illumination such as radiates, one may venture to say, from no other book, excepting the New Testament. The words set at the beginnings of the second and third books, "Written among the Quadi on the Gran," and, "Written at Carnuntum," have a rare eloquence.

The Roman province of Pannonia was that part of western Hungary which lies in the great right angle formed by the river Danube, when, after flowing eastward from Vienna about one hundred and fifty miles, it turns sharp to the south, passes Budapest, and continues for perhaps two hundred miles almost due south, before turning to the east again. Vienna was at that time the Roman camp of Vindobona. The river fleet was stationed twenty miles up the stream, at Comagenae. About twenty-five miles down the river, on the southern bank, falling short by a mile or two of lying opposite the mouth of the tributary March, was situate the camp of Carnuntum, near the site of the present village of Deutsch-Altenburg. Here bluffs, high banks, and hills, begin to shut the river in, and give it greater swiftness and depth. The scenery is nobly picturesque; to the north, the Carpathian mountain range, rising from the plain, begins its great arc of rugged rampart that half girdles Hungary. A few miles further downstream, after emerging from the defile, now called the gate of Hungary, the river continues its course through a low-lying plain until it reaches the present city of Komorn. Near here, also on the southern side of the river, lay a third camp, Brigetio (O-Szony). Further on, some twenty miles or so before the great turn

to the south, the Danube receives the tributary waters of the Gran, which flows down from the north through the area within the Carpathian semi-circle. Below the river bend, near the site of Budapest, there was a fourth camp, Aquincum, and far to the south a fifth.

These camps, at Vindobona, Carnuntum, and elsewhere, were permanent; and, before the time of Marcus Aurelius, towns had sprung up alongside, and soon harbored a considerable population. People of various classes settled there: purveyors to the army; soldiers who had completed their terms of service and wished to live in the neighborhood of their old legion; merchants, shopkeepers, and pedlars, who carried on trade with the border tribes; artisans, camp-followers of one kind or another, and so on. Doubtless, too, many friendly Barbarians found reasons to live there. And when the Emperor made a camp his headquarters, great numbers of civil officials must have thronged there to learn his will on many matters of imperial business, as well as military officers of all sorts, courtiers, adventurers, and such. These towns had their public baths, their temples, their places of amusement, an amphitheatre, and villas roundabout, and all the appurtenances of a provincial town.

Carnuntum and Vindobona were connected with Italy by a series of excellent roads, for Pannonia had been settled by the Romans for over a hundred and fifty years. The traveller would leave Rome where the *Porta del Popolo* now stands, follow the Flaminian Way to Rimini, then on to Aquileia, where he turned toward the northeast, and crossed the Julian Alps. The road ran past what is now the city of Laibach, and on to Poetavio (Pettau), and from there nearly due north by regular stages to Sabaria (Servav) and Scarabantia (Oedenburg) where the road forked, the western branch continuing on to Vindobona (Vienna), and the eastern, skirting the shallow waters of Lake Peiso (Neusiedler), to Carnuntum.

The province of Pannonia, which, as I have said, corresponds to western Hungary, was separated from the province of Dacia by the long strip of land that lies between the south-going reach of the Danube and the river Theiss, which flows nearly parallel. When Trajan decided to extend the jurisdiction of the Empire north of the Danube, he confined his conquests to the lands east of the Theiss, and left this long strip bounded by the two rivers (that pushes in like a thick wedge between the Roman provinces) to the Sarmatian tribe of Jazyges. He probably thought this land hard to defend and not worth the taking. It is a low, flat, monotonous region, dotted with swamps, and unrelieved except by rolling dunes, or, in some places, by insignificant hills. The country along the Danube, between the point where the Carpathians touch the river and the Gran, is somewhat of the same character, low and marshy; the river flows sluggishly, and at times rambles about in many little channels, as if to amuse itself by carving out numerous islands. Such districts offered easy opportunity for small bands of marauders both to attack and to escape, and were very unfavorable for the movements of a large army, encumbered with baggage and military supplies. The fighting was mainly of a guerilla sort; the Romans made continual use of their boats, both for transport of supplies and for carrying soldiers to the point of attack, and they often built temporary bridges across the river. Elsewhere, the heavier baggage was drawn in two-wheeled carts by mules or oxen. The Barbarians, on their part, would select a site, protected by marshes, cliffs, or other natural defences, and there build a stout stockade. These the Romans sometimes set fire to, and sometimes attacked with the testudo, that is, locking their shields together above their heads to protect themselves from missiles, and battering or hacking down the walls. In the open country both sides used cavalry; and now and again a pitched battle was fought. There is record of

a severe engagement that took place upon the frozen Danube.

It would be a waste of time to attempt to follow the campaigns in any detail. The progress of the Romans, though slow, was sure; and the goal aimed at by Marcus Aurelius affords proof of farsighted statesmanship. He believed that to stand on the defensive and guard the borders, was a sign of weakness, both a virtual invitation to the Barbarians to attack, and an encouragement of pusillanimity at home, that the true policy was the old Roman policy, which Trajan had followed, to push the boundaries farther and farther, incorporate new territory, impose law, introduce order, and gradually turn Barbarian warriors into peaceful husbandmen:

Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento.

His plan was to annex two new provinces across the Danube, and his perseverance (so his contemporaries thought) would have succeeded, in spite of the slothful indifference of the Senate and upper classes, whose only wish was for peace in their own day, had it not been for two untoward circumstances; the first was the rebellion of Avidius Cassius, and the second his own premature death.

During these years, passed "at Carnuntum," "among the Quadi on the Gran," or elsewhere in some border province, the Emperor, at such times as he could spare from military affairs, administered with scrupulous care the civil business of the Empire. He deemed that nothing he wrote, said, or did, was a minor matter, and held fast to his maxim, that an Emperor should do nothing in a hurry. And this he did, in spite of the fact that his health was very poor, that he could eat little or nothing, nourished himself on drugs, and suffered greatly from the cold. He was particularly devoted to his judicial duties. Justice was his great concern: "It is the source," he says, "from which all the other virtues

spring" (M. A. XI, 10); "the salvation of life consists in this, to do justice with the whole soul and to speak the truth" (M. A. XII, 29). He took endless pains in the examination and consideration of a case, put searching questions himself, exacted full answers, and allotted a liberal time for the arguments of advocates. It is said that he would sit for eleven or twelve days upon a single case, and often late into the night. One of his judicial sayings has been preserved. A high official, who was accused before him, pleaded in his own defence that he had done no act of violence. The Emperor answered: "Do you think that there can be no act of violence unless men are wounded? An act of violence is committed, whenever a man demands what he thinks is owed him in any way except according to law. And, in my opinion, it does not become your self-respect, your dignity, or your sense of duty, to do anything unlawfully." But when he could indulge himself in acts of mercy, without contravening justice, he did so. While he was holding court at Sirmium, in Pannonia, the chief rulers of Athens brought charges against our old friend, Herodes Atticus, and others. Herodes, who was half beside himself with domestic grief, behaved with gross impropriety and refused to stay. The Emperor paid no heed to the disrespect toward himself, took grief into consideration as a penalty already inflicted, let Herodes go, and only punished those whom grief had spared. Sundry instances of his mercy toward prisoners of war have also been recorded. For example, when the Quadi did not observe their vows and promises, (and they must have done something heinous,) Marcus offered a thousand pieces of gold for their king alive, or five hundred for him dead; but when the king was captured, the only punishment inflicted was banishment to Alexandria. So, too, in the case of a satrap in the Parthian war. This satrap had murdered a king, a friend to the Romans, and in peaceful conference had drawn his sword on a Roman gen-

eral, but Marcus would allow no greater punishment than exile to England. He seems always to have held before himself an ideal of duty to all men, to Barbarians as well as to Romans. "Have I done something for the general welfare of my fellows? (πεποίηκά τι κοινωνικῶς;) Then I have received my reward" (M. A. XI, 4).

A narrative of these campaigns, supposing that it were possible, would, as I have said, be quite unprofitable. Nevertheless, one episode (A. D. 174) must be mentioned, for the sake of the memorable place it has occupied in theological controversy from that time down to the days of Cardinal Newman. I quote the account given by the historian Dio Cassius, who was a lad at the time:

"Marcus Aurelius waged a great war against a people called the Quadi and unexpectedly gained the victory, by good luck, or rather because God granted it to him. For in the course of the battle, when the Romans were in peril, divine power saved them in a most unlooked-for way. The Quadi had surrounded the Romans in an unfavorable place; the Romans locked their shields, and were fighting bravely. Thereupon the Barbarians desisted from the attack, thinking that they would easily compel the others to surrender through the action of heat and thirst. The Barbarians were far more numerous, and hemmed the Romans in on every side, cutting off all communication, so that they could not get any water at all. The Romans, therefore, were in a bad plight, from fatigue, wounds, the heat of the sun, and thirst; they could neither fight nor retreat. Suddenly, while the Roman ranks stood their ground, all but ready to succumb to the heat, great clouds gathered in an instant, and a mighty rain, not without divine interposition, poured down in bursts. . . . And, while the rain was pouring down in bursts, the Romans turned their faces up, and caught the water in their mouths: some held out their shields, others their helmets, and drank great draughts, and gave their

horses to drink. And, when the Barbarians charged, the Romans drank and fought at the same moment. Some, who were already wounded so that their blood trickled into their helmets, swallowed down blood and water together. And, as most of them were busy drinking, they would have suffered great loss from the enemy's onset, had it not been that a fierce hailstorm with frequent lightning smote down upon the enemy. It was a sight to see: in one and the same place water and fire coming down from the sky simultaneously. On one side men were drenched and drinking, and on the other they were burned and dying. The fire did not touch the Romans, and if it did fall among them, it was immediately put out; neither did the rain help the Barbarians, but rather acted like oil on the flames, so that in the very midst of rain they were struggling to get water. Some wounded themselves in order to quench the fire with their blood; while others took refuge with the Romans, believing that only there could they get refuge that would save them. And therefore Marcus had mercy on them. . . . He was hailed *Imperator* by the soldiers, for the seventh time. And although it was not his custom to accept this title before it was voted by the Senate, nevertheless he took it, on the ground that he received it from God, and he wrote to the Senate." (Roman History, LXXI, 10.)

It, therefore, seems that the official report of the battle recounted this extraordinary circumstance, though probably in less florid rhetoric than that of Dio Cassius, and certainly did more than follow the conventional custom of victorious generals in ascribing victory to the gods, enough at least to give color to the story of a special intervention of Providence. The Christians at once jumped to the conclusion that a miracle had been performed in answer to the prayers of Christian soldiers. Claudius Apollinaris, Bishop of Hierapolis, in Syria, a contemporary, who addressed an *Apology for Christianity* to Marcus Aurelius, mentions it;

and, some twenty-five years later, Tertullian speaks of "the letters of Marcus Aurelius, an Emperor of high character, in which he testifies to the quenching of that German-begotten thirst by the shower obtained through the prayers of soldiers who happened to be Christians" (*Apol.* V). And, again, "Marcus Aurelius in the German expedition obtained showers in that time of thirst through the prayers offered up to God by Christian soldiers" (*Ad. Scap.* IV). Relying on these authorities by name, as well as upon others not named, Eusebius of Caesarea, the historian of early Christianity, writing in the time of Constantine, sums up the Christian version as follows: "It is said that when Marcus Aurelius Caesar was forming his troops in order of battle against the Germans and Sarmatians, he was reduced to extremities by a failure of water. Meanwhile the soldiers in the so-called Melitene legion, which for its faith remains to this day, knelt down upon the ground, as we are accustomed to do in prayer, and betook themselves to supplication. And whereas this sight was strange to the enemy, another still more strange happened immediately,—thunderbolts, which caused the enemy's flight and overthrow; and upon the army to which the men were attached, who had called upon God, a rain, which restored it entirely when it was all but perishing by thirst."

This extraordinary occurrence is further confirmed, but without the miraculous embellishments of credulous believers, by one of the pictorial reliefs on the great column, set up soon afterwards in the city of Rome to commemorate the victorious campaign. A troop of Roman soldiers are depicted advancing to battle with drawn swords; behind them other soldiers are holding up their bucklers, apparently to protect themselves from a deluge of rain; and in the background a mighty genius of storm and rain extends his winged arms to their full stretch, while torrents of water pour down from his beard, and hair, and arms. In front of

the Roman soldiers appears to be a gully at which horses are drinking, and on the ground beside it lie the bodies of dead Barbarians.

The general opinion of the time undoubtedly regarded the timely succor as a miracle. The Emperor's report, according to Dio Cassius, as I have said, attributed it to the intervention of Providence. Others, still, to the spells of an Egyptian sorcerer who was with the army. But the Christians were the most insistent, and from that day for seventeen hundred years counted the event among the special interpositions of Providence on behalf of the faithful. Perhaps there are some who do so still.

CHAPTER XIV

THE REBELLION OF AVIDIUS CASSIUS

THE Barbarians were a fickle folk and little scrupulous in the observation of treaties. The only sure way to protect the Roman provinces and secure peace was to bring the lawless peoples to the north of the Danube under the authority and laws of the Roman Empire. This was the policy that had led Augustus to incorporate in the Empire the border lands of Noricum and Pannonia, and Trajan to conquer Dacia. The deep-seated law which governs the fortunes of a conquering people had decreed that the boundaries of the Roman Empire must be ever enlarged, or they would contract. Between a great civilized state and its Barbarian neighbors, there must be struggle and warfare and if the tide of civilizing conquest does not rise, it means that the flood has been reached and ebb is at hand. The Roman people and the Senate, having lost the old Roman temper, did not understand this necessity, but Marcus Aurelius did. As Professor Bury says, he "had the insight of a true statesman." In spite of the inertia at Rome and of his own fondness for peace, leisure, and literature, the Emperor recognized the necessity of conquest as the only foundation of permanent peace, and was, as it seems, making ready to carry out this policy, when of a sudden his plans and preparations were brought to a stop. He received word, in or about the month of May, 175 A. D., from the governor of Cappadocia, that Avidius Cassius had raised the standard of revolt in Syria and proclaimed himself Emperor.

At the close of the Parthian war, when Lucius Verus went back to Rome, Avidius Cassius had been left as a kind of military governor of Syria and the adjacent provinces with far-reaching authority. He continued to maintain the high reputation he had won in the Parthian war, and suppressed revolts in Arabia and in Egypt, with vigilance and dexterity. But he was a mere soldier, warped by admiration for his famous ancestor, Caesar's enemy, and for the warlike virtues of ancient Rome. His narrow sympathies could not appreciate at their value either the Emperor's generosity or his sagacity. He acknowledged that he was a good man, but according to his opinion, an Emperor should not concern himself with the nature of the physical universe or of the soul, but with military matters; a soldier, not a philosopher, should sit upon the throne. He felt about Marcus Aurelius as some Northern generals felt about Lincoln in our Civil War, that he was much too deficient in the stern temper that should belong to a commander-in-chief. And when he proclaimed that governors and officials appointed by the Emperor,—men perhaps who did not look upon war as their main concern,—were working only to make themselves rich, no doubt he believed it. He never made any attempt to conceal his opinions, and Lucius Verus soon after going to Syria, to assume supreme command in the Parthian war, got wind of them, and wrote to warn Marcus:

[Antioch (?), 163 (?).]

Dear Marcus:

Avidius Cassius is avid to be Emperor, at least he seems so to me and long ago in my Grandfather's time, your Father's time, he showed himself so. I wish you would see that he is kept under observation. He is dissatisfied with everything we do, he is collecting great resources, and he laughs at our letters. He calls you a philosophical old woman and me a prodigal fool. Please consider what should

be done. I don't dislike the man; but, if you keep in the camp a man whom the soldiers like to hear and like to see, look out lest you mismanage your own interests and your children's.

LUCIUS VERUS.

The foolish pun in the opening of the letter perhaps detracted from the seriousness of the warning; or, Marcus may have seen in this letter a little touch of jealousy, in that Lucius, too conscious of his imperial dignity, had been vexed to find that even an Emperor must accommodate himself to the downright character of the man who controls the army, and he was well aware that though Lucius might be of great service, Cassius was indispensable. He wrote back:

[Rome (?), 163 (?).]

DEAR LUCIUS:

I have read your letter; it is rather more anxious-minded than becomes an Emperor, and does not accord with present-day usage. For if Heaven has destined Cassius to receive the Empire, we could not kill him even if we wished. You remember your Great-grandfather's saying: "No man can kill his successor." And if not, without any act of severity on our part, he will of himself fall into the trap of fate. Besides we cannot make him out a traitor; nobody has come forward to accuse him, and as you yourself say, the soldiers love him. And also, it is in the nature of trials for high treason that people think that even those whose guilt is proved are the victims of power. You remember very well what your Grandfather Hadrian said: "Wretched is the condition of Emperors, for no man will believe in a plot against them, until they have been murdered." I have preferred to cite him rather than Domitian, who is said to have been the original author of the saying; for even the wise sayings of tyrants do not have the weight they ought. So

let him go his own gait, especially as he is a good general, strict and brave; indeed the State cannot do without him. As to your suggestion that I should safeguard the welfare of my children by putting him to death; oh, no, if Avidius deserves more than my children to be loved, and if it is better for the Empire that Cassius live rather than they, let them perish.

MARCUS.

For ten years Avidius Cassius remained loyal. The final factors that caused him to revolt were even then so little known that ridiculous stories of Faustina's complicity were invented, how she feared Marcus's poor health would soon give way, and told Cassius that she would marry him, and so forth. Cassius gave out that Marcus was dead; perhaps he had heard such a report and believed it; and when it proved untrue, it was too late to withdraw. Born in Cyrrhus, and popular all through the East as the defender of Syria and conqueror of the Parthians, he found it easy to win over Antioch and the adjacent country to his cause. The governor of Egypt supported him.

This was the most serious rebellion that had broken out since Domitian was overthrown, and Marcus felt outraged both as an individual and as Emperor. He kept the news quiet at first, but it leaked out, and there was much talk in the camp. He called the soldiers and read this speech.

"Fellow Soldiers: I do not come before you to express indignation nor to complain. Is it right to be angry with the divine will, in whose power all things are? But perhaps one may pity those who meet misfortune without their fault; and that is now my case. Is it not very hard for us to pass on from war to war? Is it not horrible to be at war with our own people? But to find there is no loyalty in men outdoes such hardship and outdoes such horror. My very best friend

has plotted against me and forced me, against my will, to take the field, though I have committed no act of injustice, nor done what I ought not to have done. What virtue or friendship can be counted on as sure after this experience of mine? Has not faith suffered wreck, has not good hope suffered wreck? If I alone were in danger, I should have made light of the affair, for I was not born immortal; but as there has been public secession or rather rebellion, and the war affects us all, I cannot. I should have liked, had it been possible, to summon Cassius to come into court and argue the matter out with him, either before you or before the Senate; and I would gladly have resigned my throne in his favor without a struggle if that had seemed for the good of the State. For it is for the sake of the State that I undergo hardship and danger, and have spent so much time here away from Italy, although I am now an old man, without much strength, and cannot take food without distress, nor sleep without worry. But since Cassius would never be willing to agree to such a meeting,—for how could he put faith in me after he has been so faithless to me,—you must be of good courage. The Cilicians, Syrians, Jews, and Egyptians never have been your betters and never will be, not even if they could gather together as many thousands more than you as they are now actually less. Nor should we hold Cassius himself of much account, even if he is thought to be a good general and often to have managed successfully. For an eagle leading an army of jackdaws, or a lion at the head of fawns, does not make a worthy adversary. Besides it was not Cassius, but you, who prevailed in the Arabian and Parthian wars. And even if he is well reputed for what was done against the Parthians, yet you have [Martius] Verus, who has been not a whit less victorious than he, nay, more, and has brought more booty home.

"But perhaps Cassius has already changed his mind, now that he has learned that I am alive. For he did this for no

other reason but that I was dead. And even if he still keeps on, yet when he learns that we are on the march, he will, out of fear of you and respect for me, confess that he is all in the wrong.

"There is but one thing that I am afraid of, Fellow Soldiers, for I shall speak the whole truth to you, and that is lest he kill himself, to avoid the shame of coming into our presence, or that someone else, knowing that I am on the way to take the field against him, may do the deed. Then I shall be robbed of the great prize of victorious war, such as no man ever had. What is that prize? To forgive the man who has done me wrong, to remain a friend to him who has violated my friendship, and to remain faithful to him after he has broken faith with me. Perhaps you find this hard to understand, but you ought not to disbelieve it. For all good things have not utterly perished from the earth; there is in us still a remnant of our antique virtue. And if anyone does disbelieve it, that makes me wish so much the more for him to behold what he would not believe could be done. I should at least derive some profit from the present evils, if I were able to settle the matter with honor, and show to all the world that it is possible to deal righteously even with civil war."

Marcus made preparations to meet the rebels, sent for his son Commodus, then nearly fifteen, and left the northern front. How he proceeded toward the East is uncertain. If the following letters are genuine, he chose the route through Italy, probably in order to ascertain the temper of the people, and posted down by way of Aquileia. Rome was in great alarm, but the Senate and people were wholly loyal. Marcus did not enter Rome itself, fearing perhaps inevitable delays; and news of Cassius's death must have reached him soon. His haste appears from this brief note despatched to Faustina:

[Dearest Faustina]:

Lucius was right when he wrote me that Avidius wanted to be Emperor. I think you have heard what the messengers from [Martius] Verus have reported about him. Come to Albano, if the gods please, so that we may talk over everything. Don't be alarmed.

[Marcus.]

[Dearest Marcus]:

I will go, as you wish, to Albano early tomorrow; nevertheless I urge you now, if you love your children, to deal severely with the rebels. Officers and privates, who oppress unless they are themselves oppressed, have got into very bad ways.

[Faustina.]

[Dearest Marcus]:

At the time of Celsus' rebellion my mother Faustina besought your Father Pius to show first toward his own family the piety that he showed to other men's families. That Emperor is *not* pious who does not think of his wife and children. Remember how young Commodus is, and our son-in-law Pompeianus is getting old and he is foreign born. Be circumspect about what you do in regard to Avidius Cassius and his confederates. Don't spare men who have not spared you, and who, if they had won, would not spare me or our children. I will follow after you at once. I could not get to the Villa Formiana, because dear Fadilla was sick. And if I shan't be able to overtake you at Formiae, I will follow on to Capua; the place will do good to my ailments and the children's. Please send Doctor Soteridas to Formiae. I have no confidence in Pisitheus; he doesn't know how to take care of an unmarried girl. Calpurnius gave me the sealed letter; I shall answer it, if I am late, by Caecilius,

the old eunuch; you know he is a trusty fellow. I will tell him by word of mouth, what (according to report) Avidius Cassius's wife, his children, and his son-in-law say about you.

[Faustina.]

Dear Faustina:

I recognize that you are acting out of a high sense of duty toward your husband and our children. I have read over your letter that I got at the Villa Formiana, in which you urge me to punish those who have aided and abetted Avidius. But, notwithstanding, I shall spare his children, his son-in-law, and his wife, and I shall write to the Senate, so that the proscription may not be too severe or the punishment too harsh. For there is nothing that does more for a Roman Emperor in the eyes of foreign nations than mercy. It was mercy that raised Caesar to his apotheosis and consecrated Augustus; mercy conferred the beautiful ornament of the name *Pius* on your father. To go further, if the upshot of this war had lain in my hands, Avidius would not have been killed. Please be sure of this.

> Di me tuentur, dis pietas mea
> . . . cordi est. [Horace, *Odes*, I, 17.]
>
> The gods protect me, for my godliness
> Touches their hearts.

Marcus.

The Emperor wrote to the Senate: ". . . Now with respect to Cassius's rebellion, I beg and beseech you, Conscript Fathers, to put aside thoughts of punishment and have regard for my notions, or rather yours, of duty and of mercy: let not the Senate condemn a single man to death. Let no Senator be punished, no nobleman's blood be spilt, let the banished come home, let the proscribed take back their property. Would that I could call back from the dead those who have already suffered the penalty. The punish-

ments inflicted by an Emperor for wrongs done him are never in favor; the more just he is, the crueler he will be thought. So you will please pardon the children of Avidius Cassius, his son-in-law, and wife. But why should I say 'pardon'? For they have done nothing. Let them live in safety, and know that they live under Marcus. Let them live on the patrimony allotted to them, let them enjoy their gold, their silver, and their clothes; let them be rich, unmolested, and free to go about at will; let them take about everywhere, in all countries, this example of your and my conception of what is right. Nor is the exemption of children and wives from proscription, Conscript Fathers, a great act of clemency. Indeed, I ask of you to deliver all of the Senatorial and Equestrian orders, who were privy to the rebellion, from death, proscription, fear, disgrace or odium, and in short from every evil consequence, and confer this upon my reign, that public opinion shall approve the death of every man who in time of rebellion has lost his life for treason."

The Senate, which in time of alarm, had proclaimed Cassius a public enemy and confiscated his property hailed this act of clemency with tumultuous approval: "Pious Antoninus, may the gods keep you! Clement Antoninus, may the gods keep you! You have willed what was right, we have done our duty. We demand that Commodus shall have his rightful share in the Empire. Stablish your family, and make our children safe. No violence has power to hurt a good government. We ask you to give Commodus the tribunician power; we ask that you stay in Rome. In the name of your philosophy, your patience, your learning, your nobility, your goodness. You conquer your enemies, and overcome them that hate you, for the gods protect you," etc.

The rebellion did not last long. Martius Verus, governor of Cappadocia stood firm, and Clodius Albinus, commanding at Bithynia, checked a tendency among the soldiers sta-

tioned there to join Cassius. Within a hundred days Cassius was murdered by his officers, and his head brought to the Emperor. There was no rejoicing. It was obvious to everybody that he would have spared him if he could. Cassius's son Maecianus was killed by the soldiers, and a few centurions were executed, but with these exceptions the Emperor's wishes were followed. Someone ventured to take him to task for dealing so gently with a traitor to himself and his children, and asked, "And what if Cassius had conquered?" Marcus answered, "Not so have I worshipped the gods, not so have I lived, that it was possible for him to conquer me." And then he reckoned up the Emperors that had been murdered, and showed how they had deserved to die, Nero, Caligula, Otho, Vitellius; but that no rebel, however strong, had been able to triumph over Augustus, Trajan, Hadrian, or Antoninus Pius, but had been put down, sometimes even before the Emperors had knowledge of their purpose. And when a chest of letters was discovered, that no doubt contained the names of all who were privy to the rebellion, he bade the contents be burned unread.

At first he laid a slight punishment upon the people of Antioch and the rebellious towns of Syria, forbidding the celebration of games and shows, and imposing some other penalties of that sort; but before long he revoked even these.

So ended the rebellion, with no struggle and little bloodshed. Like the attacks of the Marcomanni and the Jazyges, it was one of the signs of evil days to come. The outlying members of the Empire had grown too heavy for the weakening heart; and, from this time on, the personal vanity of a general, the ambition or greed of his officers, the restless wish for change and excitement among the troops, or mere local patriotism, persuaded many a man to undertake Cassius's venture and for the sake of empire stake his life upon the issue of a thousand hazards. Foreboding of all this is written on Marcus's wan, care-worn, innocent face.

CHAPTER XV

CLOSING YEARS

IT was expedient for the Emperor to visit the eastern provinces and see with his own eyes how the rebellion had affected them. Faustina and Commodus accompanied him. The course of his travels is uncertain, but everywhere he was made most welcome; and well they might welcome him, for he went as on an errand of mercy, forgiving on all sides. Cyrrhus, the birthplace of Cassius and the hearthstone of the rebellion, he passed by, perhaps only in order to avoid giving offence by an appearance of triumph; but he went to Alexandria, where as proof of complete reconciliation and good will he left his daughter, and to Antioch. He probably went on to the Euphrates; at any rate he gave audience to the border chiefs and to the Persian ambassadors. He then went westward, as it seems, and had got as far as Halala, a little village at the foot of Mt. Taurus, when Faustina fell suddenly ill and died. The testimony concerning them as man and wife is little, but it all points to wedded happiness and true affection. The early letters between Fronto and Marcus that refer to her, the utter absence of any jealousy in either, or cause for jealousy from him, their thirteen children, their common griefs, the coins that bear her effigy, with the word *Felicitas, Hilaritas, Diana, Concordia, Pudicitia, Laetitia Publica,* or such, upon the back, her habit of accompanying him on the arduous campaigns along the Danube, for which she received the title *Mother of the Camp,* her going with him on his travels to the East, apparently as a matter of course although she had not been well, and, crowning all, his pri-

vate prayer of thanks "for a wife, so docile, so loving, and so simple" (M. A. I, 17), and his grief which was very great (ἰσχυρῶς πενθήσας)—all these make a very strong, if not a conclusive, case of conjugal fidelity on her part. The evil tongues that busied themselves to defame her reputation belong to a later time, after Commodus had filled to overflowing the cup of cruelty and ignominy, so that even decent people could not believe that he was really the son of Marcus Aurelius.

Marcus's only comfort seemed to lie in the thought that not a single wife, mother, sister, or daughter had wept for the condemnation of Cassius's accomplices. To keep himself free from the guilt of blood was with him almost an obsession. At the time of the drought and the miraculous rain during the Barbarian war, so the report goes, he lifted his hand toward heaven and said, "With this hand which has never taken life, I turn to Thee and worship the Giver of life." He also seems to have taken comfort in doing honor to Faustina's memory. He asked the Senate to decree divine honors and build a temple to her, and, following the example of Antoninus Pius, when the elder Faustina died, he also instituted a charity for poor girls, a second establishment for "girls of Faustina," in her memory. He bestowed the privilege of a Roman colony upon the village where she died, and built a temple there. In Rome, as a further honor, an altar was set up in the temple of Venus and Rome to Marcus and to Faustina, and on it were placed silver statues of the two, and all the brides in the city repaired there with their newly wedded husbands to offer prayers. And whenever the Emperor went to the theatre a golden image of Faustina was carried in the imperial chariot and placed in the seat where she had used to sit; and the column which still stands in the Piazza Colonna, built to commemorate the Emperor's victories in the North, was dedicated *Divo Marco et Divae Faustinae,* and on the top her statue was set beside his.

After Faustina's death, on their way back to Rome, Marcus and Commodus stopped at Smyrna. Here, as had been his custom in passing through cities of the Hellenistic East, he paid his respects to philosophy and literature. Possibly he turned to them as the great comforters of men in sorrow, hoping to find the balm that he could not find elsewhere; or, perhaps, knowing that they are the great civilizers, and develop the spiritual as well as the intellectual side of man, he cherished a notion that the commonwealth of letters and liberal arts might serve as part foundation for the greater Commonwealth of Humanity, to which he uplifted his eyes. Perhaps he merely fulfilled what he conceived to be the duty of a sovereign toward distinguished personages of the provinces, or was actuated by sentimental memories of Fronto and the study of rhetoric in his happy youth. At any rate, he made it his business to be gracious to eminent professors and men of letters wherever he went. At Tarsus he had gone to hear the famous young Hermogenes, a youth so precocious that at the age of fifteen his lectures were thronged, and who, while still very young, wrote a celebrated book on rhetoric, only second in merit, at that time and for long after, to Aristotle's treatise, but whose genius, from the very overripeness of his youth, was spent before he was twenty-five and achieved nothing of note afterwards. The Emperor found the report of his eloquence true and richly rewarded him.

At Smyrna he had already passed three days, and had not seen Aristides, the most distinguished among Greek men of letters since Herodes Atticus, so he asked his chief officers, the brothers Quintilii, whose careers were destined to a tragic end under Commodus, if he might not have overlooked Aristides among the crowd that had come to pay their respects. The Quintilii said they had not seen him, for they would not have failed to introduce him. So the next day they brought him to the imperial presence, and he asked

Aristides why he had not seen him before. Aristides replied, "Your Majesty, I was busy with a theory, and a mind busy with a theory must not be taken off the scent." The Emperor was delighted to find him so frank and simple, and so devoted to study, and said, "And when shall I hear you?" Aristides answered: "Suggest a topic today, and you shall hear me tomorrow, for I belong not to the *improvisatori*, but to those who speak after careful consideration. And, will your Majesty please to let my pupils be present at the lecture?" "They may," Marcus said, "for it is open to the public." And then when Aristides added, "And will your Majesty please let them clap and cheer as much as ever they can?" the Emperor smiled and said, "That will depend on you."

Finally he went to Athens, for there if anywhere were to be found the embers of the fire that had given intellectual and spiritual warmth to the Hellenic world, and there, if that warmth was to be renewed, the dwindled fire must be fed with fresh fuel and ministered to with greater assiduity. Marcus wished in particular to hear Adrian, who even then enjoyed a high reputation as a sophist, or professor of learning, and was destined to win great admiration from the fashionable world at Rome. The connoisseurs and dilettanti of the metropolis were amazed and charmed by the sweet modulation of his voice, melodious as the nightingale, and by the beauty of his language whether in prose or verse; so much so that when these men of fashion were gathered together to see dancing or some such show, and word went round that Adrian was going to declaim at the Athenaeum, they all rushed out to hurry thither, pushing and jostling one another as they went. But Marcus had a private motive of his own for going to hear Adrian; he had appointed him to the chair of rhetoric, or whatever it was, solely upon his reputation, and he wished to learn with his own ears whether he had done wisely. The topic proposed for the lecture, or

declamation, was an oration appropriate to the orator Hyperides, at a time when he found himself in a particular situation with respect to Demosthenes and Philip of Macedon. Rhetoric, in this aspect, was elaborately artificial, it required an uncommon and peculiar skill both in composition and in declamation, and when the talents for these two artificial accomplishments were happily united, their possessor became a very important person, somewhat like a great opera singer today. Adrian amply upheld his reputation; in particular he observed the proprieties of the situation in which Hyperides was supposed to be, and the general opinion went that he showed himself not inferior even to the renowned Polemon, whom Marcus had heard, not with whole-hearted approval, long years before. The Emperor rewarded the orator with many gifts.

At Athens he attached salaries of ten thousand drachmas a year to the principal professorships, in what we may call the university, including those of the four main schools of philosophy, of the Stoics, the Epicureans, the Academy, and the Peripatetics. The Emperor was also initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries. Perhaps he did this out of imperial courtesy, for he did but follow the precedent set by Hadrian, and indeed by many Romans from the days of Cicero and Atticus; but perhaps, somewhere in the depths of his heart there lurked an iridescent hope that here in this land of Hellas, this home of thought, of art, of heroism, where the soul of man had found its fullest and noblest expression, at least so the pagan world thought, there might be found some illumination denied to other places. If there was a divine light shining in heaven above, through what window could it send its shaft of light to this earth of ours, except through that which Athens had flung open wide? And, it may be, that Adrian and other Athenian scholars recalled to him what the Homeric hymn to Demeter, what Pindar and Sophocles, had said of the initiates, and that in his

yearning for help from without, he floated for a moment on the dream that there might be a touch of truth in those promises of happiness hereafter, that Socrates might not have been wholly wrong when he said (according to Plato): "I fancy that those men who established the mysteries were not unenlightened, but in reality had a hidden meaning when they said long ago that whoever goes uninitiated and unsanctified to the other world will be in the mire, but he who arrives there initiated and purified will dwell with the gods." Or he may have remembered Cicero's testimony that the sacred initiation gave happiness to the living and a nobler hope to those who are going to die. But, be that as it may, his long Stoic discipline had taught him to stand on his own feet and find the motives for holiness and the rewards of righteousness all within, and if for a moment he yielded to the urgency of Athenian expectation, to the magic of Plato's words, or to the more transcendental teachings in Epictetus, it must have been only for a moment. The power of communicating a belief in a divine order of love and righteousness had passed from the priests of Demeter and Persephone to a sect of which he knew next to nothing. Eleusis left him cold; at least there is no word in the *Meditations* to suggest that he obtained refreshment there.

From Athens the Emperor and Commodus went back to Rome. Their stay was brief, for the Emperor's presence was required on the Danube to complete the work of subjugating the Marcomanni and other Barbarians, and of incorporating their lands within the domains of the Empire. Marcus stayed long enough, however, to carry out the wish expressed by the Senate at the time of Cassius's rebellion. The Senate, in its extreme apprehension lest the succession be disputed, was very anxious that the Antonine dynasty be assured. Commodus had been most carefully educated and there was a general hope and expectation that he would be worthy of his father. Marcus did all he could to constitute

him heir; he made him consul, conferred upon him the sacerdotium, the tribunician power, created him Augustus; and gave him a wife (A. D. 177). This done, he hurried back to assume command of the army, taking Commodus with him. Battles were fought and fresh victories gained. This border warfare is tedious and obscure. It seems clear that the Emperor was resolute to carry out his interrupted purpose of pushing the imperial boundary to the river Elbe. But this was not to be. A task so wearisome, so exacting, so fraught with perils, so barren of fame, required a man who was ready to endure great privations and petty discomforts, to sacrifice self and renounce all the common pleasures of life, for the good of the Empire. While Marcus lived all went well. But his frail body could not stand the strain. He was taken very ill at Vindobona, and felt that death was upon him.

He called his friends and relations together, and set Commodus before them, and raising himself on his couch, said: "I am not surprised that you grieve to see me lying here in this condition, for it is in human nature to feel pity at the misfortunes of kinsmen, and sufferings that strike upon our sight call forth greater compassion. But I think that something more is due to me from you. For I have hoped, not without reason, from the state of my feelings toward you, that my good will was returned. And now is a very timely time for me to learn that not in vain all this while have I shown you honor and spent myself for you, and for you to do a favor in return and show you are not unmindful of what you have received.

"Behold my son,—you yourselves have educated him,—just embarking on the age of manhood and in need of captain and pilot, like one caught in winter storms, lest he be borne adrift by imperfect experience of what is necessary, and dashed up against evil practices. So, instead of me, be to him many fathers, take good care of him and give him the

wisest counsel. Unless a ruling prince has the good will of his subjects no riches are sufficient for his helplessness, nor can a regiment of spearmen protect him. It is the princes who have instilled into their subjects' hearts, not fear of their cruelty but love of their goodness, that have reigned long in safety. It is not the men who serve because they must, but who obey from a reasoned obedience, that are not to be suspected and are free in all their dealings from hypocritical flattery, and never rebel unless driven to it by outrageous insolence.

"It is hard to be temperate and set a bound to our desires, when power is there to serve them. But if you will advise him in these matters and remind him of what he now hears in our presence, you will make of him an excellent Emperor both for yourselves and for everybody, and you will do the greatest favor to my memory; in this way only shall you be able to make it immortal."

Death did not find the Emperor unprepared. Indeed, he had meditated so much over it that the shadow of a suspicion flits across one's mind that he was almost apprehensive of death, as if he feared lest some evil influence, corporeal weakness perhaps, might play his soul false and make him face death after the manner of lesser peoples, and not in the antique Roman way. But, in reality, these meditations share with many others the cloak of impersonality, as if his instinct had been to preserve his high Stoical attitude even in communion with his own heart. So completely had he practised his creed, that self-restraint, self-dominion, self-effacement, were habitual with him. He speaks of death again and again: "We must await death with a cheerful mind; why should we dread it, it is but an untying of what life has bound together?" (M. A. II, 17); "Birth brings certain elements together, death scatters them apart" (M. A. IV, 5); "Either we are made of atoms, and they will be scattered, or if life is a whole in itself, it will either survive

or be extinguished" (M. A. VII, 32); "There will be either no sensation at all, or life of some other kind" (M. A. VIII, 58); "The Stoic has long learned like a dying man, to disdain the flesh" (M. A. II, 2); "and what does life proffer? Sensation, desire, growth, the use of speech, the exercise of reason? What is there here to tempt one?" (M. A. XII, 31); "Death is one of Nature's doings" (M. A. II, 12); "it is a step taken by the spirit of universal life, it is part of life's business" (M. A. IX, 3; M. A. X, 36). A childish imagination may ascribe terrors to death, but let a man's reason look, and it finds merely a process of Nature, a stage in life. "We must pass through this moment of time in accordance with Nature, and come cheerful to the end, imitating the ripe olive that falls praising the earth that bore it and grateful to the tree that nurtured it" (M. A. IV, 48).

And nothing is so commonplace as death. Look back. Where are Augustus, Livia, the princess Julia, Agrippa, Maecenas, and all that illustrious court? Where are the descendants of the great Pompey? What noble breed but may come to the trite epitaph, "Last of his race?" (M. A. VIII, 31). The past is one long line of burials, the husband buries his wife, and then another buries him (M. A. VIII, 25). How many wits, how many wise physicians, how many astrologers who have predicted death, how many conquerors, kings, and Emperors have died? (M. A. IV, 48). And when a man looks about him, sees what the world is, and perceives even at his bedside those that will be glad to be rid of him (M. A. X, 36), what question can he ask but, μέχρι τίνος οὖν; (How long, O God?) (M. A. VI, 46). And how brief and inevitable the conclusion! "Thou hast embarked, thou hast made thy voyage, thou hast come to land. Now disembark" (M. A. III, 3). It is almost the *Doch getrost! du bist zu Haus* of Heinrich Heine. If this unknown shore be a land of the living, the gods will be there; but if it be oblivion, thou shalt

be delivered from pain and pleasure, and from bondage to this vessel of clay (M. A. III, 3). Death is Nature's mystery (M. A. IV, 5).

So equipped, houseled and aneled after the brave Stoic fashion, the Emperor Marcus Aurelius disembarked upon the unknown shore. It is said that on the last day but one of his life, knowing that his end was near, for he had refused food and drink, he sent for his friends, and with a smile for the vanities of the world (*ridens res humanas*), and such indifference for death that it appeared contempt, he asked: "Why do you weep for me? why don't you rather consider the pestilence and the common death?" And as they were about to go, he said: "Since you now let me depart, I bid you farewell and I go on before you." Then they asked to whose care he commended Commodus, and he answered, "To you, if he be worthy, and to the immortal gods." Finally, when the officer of the guard asked for the watchword, he said, "Go to the rising sun, for I sink to my setting." On the last day he saw Commodus only, and but a moment, for fear lest he take the disease. Then he covered up his head as if for sleep, and that night gave up the ghost (March 17, 180 A. D.).

CHAPTER XVI

TWO PAGAN CRITICISMS

IN this chapter I shall refer to the criticisms that have been made upon Marcus Aurelius. But, first, as a fitting prologue to an apology, I will begin with some favorable testimonies of Dio Cassius (150-235 ?), Herodianus (165-255 ?), and such other historians of the ancient world as have spoken of him, in order to make it plain at the very first that outside of certain special criticisms there is nothing but eulogy. Dio Cassius uses these phrases: "Always so pure, honorable, and religious-minded" (LXXI, 30); "He refrained from all wrongdoing" (do. 34); "All that he did was done for virtue's sake, and nothing from pretense" (do. 34); "Most of his life he spent in acts of beneficence" (do. 34); "He governed better than anyone who has ever been in power" (do. 34). He owed much to education, but more to his natural disposition, for before he was under his famous teachers "he set his soul stalwartly toward virtue" (do. 35).

Herodian says: "He made every virtue his business" (I, 2); "He was the only king who has proved his philosophy, not by words, but by his sober, righteous, and godly life and character" (do. 2). When he died he "left a longing for him in the hearts of living men and an immortal memory of his virtue unto generations yet to come." And, at the news, "every man, whether in the army or civil life, was weighed down by grief; not a soul in the whole Empire but received the news with tears, they called him their noble father, their good Emperor, their gallant leader, their wise and temperate king. And none spoke false" (do. 4).

Eutropius (fourth century): "Without a doubt a most noble man . . . whom it is easier to wonder at than to praise"; "He restored the fortunes of the commonwealth by his virtue and his gentleness."

Sextus Aurelius Victor (fourth century): "He had all the virtues and a celestial mind"; "Had it not been for him the whole Roman State would have toppled over in a single fall"; "On his death Rome was upset by the public grief, the Senators put on mourning and met with tears in the Senate chamber . . . . No one doubted that he had gone to heaven; however hard it might be to believe in the ascension of Romulus, everybody believed in that of Marcus." And Julius Capitolinus, the biographer, who is so ready to tell evil, speaks of his *sanctitas, tranquillitas,* and *pietas,* and tells how "everybody loved him, the old men loved him as a son, the young men as a father, those more of his own age as a brother, and all spoke of him under these several names." And, "on the day of his funeral no one thought he was to be lamented, for all were sure that he had been lent by the gods and had gone home to them. And everybody, all ages, every rank and class, paid him honors as a god, and anyone who might by hook or crook get his picture and did not have it in his house, was thought to be a sacrilegious wretch." And the chronicler adds that "even in his day in many a house a statuette of Marcus Aurelius stood among the household gods; and that there were men who said that Marcus had foretold them in dreams of the future and had foretold truly."

I cite these scattered bits from these various writers, as evidence of the special place which Marcus held, and continued to hold for centuries, in the popular imagination, a place personal to himself, quite distinct from his position as one of the Antonines, who, taken together, represented to succeeding generations a golden age like that of the poets, (as our friend Fronto says,) *illud a poetis saeculum*

aureum memoratum; for, I repeat, outside of certain definite reproaches, all the world is in agreement that Marcus Aurelius far transcended the moral measure of ordinary men.

Of these reproaches, which are three in number, the first two are of the same kind, but the third comes from quite a different and alien source, and must be dealt with by itself. The first two had better be set forth in the form adopted by the most illustrious, as well as the most just and sympathetic, of the ancient critics, who, in presenting the two reproaches, follows some traditional criticism rather than his own opinion, and by his explanation and argument quite takes their sting away. I refer to what that strange, wayward genius, the Emperor Julian, whom we call the Apostate, has said in his satire *The Caesars.* The story is this:

Romulus, himself deified, gives a banquet in heaven to celebrate the feast of the Saturnalia, to which he invites the gods and the Roman Emperors. The gods come first and take their places. Silenus, the wag, who serves as the mouthpiece of satire, sits beside the young and laughter-loving Bacchus, and makes jibes and jests at the Emperors as they arrive, one by one, Julius, Augustus, Tiberius, and so on. Caligula no sooner appears than he is seized by the Furies, and hurled headlong to Tartarus; Nero, also. Then follow Galba, Otho, Vitellius, Vespasian, Titus, Domitian, Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and Antoninus Pius, and all the while, Silenus cracks his jokes at their expense. At last "the pair of brothers enter, Marcus and Lucius; Silenus looks cross for he can find nothing to jeer at or make fun of, especially as to Marcus. And yet Silenus pries in meddlesome fashion, charging that Marcus had not done as he should in regard to his wife and his son, in that he mourned for Faustina more than was becoming, considering she had not been a model of decorum (κοσμία), and as to his son, in that he put it in his power to destroy the State, although

he had a son-in-law of high character who would have managed the commonwealth more wisely and taken better care of Commodus than he himself had done. Nevertheless with all his meddlesome investigation into these matters, Silenus revered the greatness of Marcus's virtue." Other Emperors follow, and, at the request of Hercules, Alexander the Great is also admitted.

After the feast Jupiter announces a contest of merit. The great warriors, Julius Caesar, Augustus, and Trajan are bid step forward. Saturn turns to Jupiter and says he is surprised to see that fighting Emperors are called forth, but no philosopher. Jupiter answers, "I like philosophers just as much; call up Marcus Aurelius." Marcus is called and comes forward, "with an aspect of great seriousness, contracting his eyes and eyebrows from pain; his beauty wears a neglected look, for his person is simple and unadorned, his beard very long, his dress plain and modest, and his body from lack of nourishment is diaphanous, translucent, as if there were a very pure and radiant light within." He is admitted within the sacred enclosure.

It is then settled that each contestant shall speak on his own behalf, for a certain length of time to be determined by the water-glass. Mercury ignores a suggestion by Silenus that Trajan and Alexander may mistake the contents of the glass and drink it up, and announces that each contestant is to proclaim what he has achieved. Caesar, Alexander, Augustus, and Trajan (as was to be expected) boast of their victories; Constantine, also, boasts of his. When Marcus began to speak, Silenus whispered to Bacchus, "Now we shall hear what paradoxes and wonderful opinions this Stoic will utter." But Marcus looking at Jupiter and the other gods said: "Jupiter, ye Gods, there is no need for me to make a speech, nor labor in this contest. If you did not know all about my life, it would be proper for me to tell it

to you; but since you know, and nothing is hid from you, you yourselves will estimate me according to my worth."

"For Marcus seemed a wonderful person in everything, and in this respect exceptionally wise, [such is the reflection of the Emperor Julian,] in that he knew, as the poet says,

> When it was time to speak and
> When it was best to keep silent."

The gods did not vote at once, but asked to hear from the candidates not only their achievements but what each thought was the end and purpose of life. The goddess Fortune interrupts to complain that none of the candidates, except Augustus, had acknowledged their debt to her. But Mercury proceeded with the questioning, and asked Alexander the Great what he believed to be the noblest thing and what he had striven for. Alexander answered, "To conquer the whole world." Trajan, "I strove for the same things as Alexander, only with greater moderation." Silenus is beginning to quiz Trajan, when Bacchus breaks in: "Go to glory, you jeer at them all and don't let them speak for themselves. But stop your nonsense about them now, and see what you can say against Marcus. He seems to me a man, to quote Simonides, 'four square and beyond the reach of blame.'" Mercury turned to Marcus and asked, "And what do you think, Marcus, is the end of life?" Marcus answered quietly and soberly, "To imitate the gods." The irrepressible Silenus questions him, "Tell me, what did you use to think was the way to imitate the gods?" Marcus answered, "To have as few needs as possible, and to do good to as many as I could." "But surely," said Silenus, "you needed something?" Marcus answered, "*I* needed nothing, but perhaps my body had some little needs." To this question, also, Marcus was judged to have answered well. Silenus was at a loss, but at last returned to the points in which he thought Marcus had not done rightly or reason-

ably, as to his wife and son, in that he had enrolled her among the deities and that he had entrusted the Empire to him. Marcus answered: "In this also I imitated the gods; for I obeyed Homer who says,

> Surely whatsoever man is good and sound of mind
> Loves his own wife and cherishes her.

And as to my son, I have Jupiter's own reasoning, for he said to Mars, 'Long ago I would have smitten you with my thunderbolt, were it not that I love you because you are my son.' Besides I never thought that my son would be so bad. And though his youth, assailed on all sides by strong temptations, swaying to and fro, was borne down to the worse, he was not bad when I entrusted the State to him; he turned out to be bad after he had received it. Therefore, as to my wife I acted in accordance with the vehement love of godlike Achilles, and as to my son I followed the example of almighty Jupiter; and besides I did no novel thing. It is the custom to bequeath the succession to one's sons, and all fathers pray that it may be so. And I am not the first to do honor to a wife; I did as many others have done. Perhaps it would not be wise to initiate such practices, but it would border close on injustice to debar nearest relations from doing what had been done over and over again. But I forget myself, I have made too long a defence before you, O Jupiter and ye Gods, who have knowledge of this already. So please excuse my over zeal." When the decision of the gods was announced Marcus had received a majority of the votes.

In his satire the Emperor Julian reports the only two reproaches that the ancient world cast at Marcus, that he did wrong to give to Faustina divine honors and to bequeath the Empire to Commodus. On both these points Julian's defence seems to me an adequate plea in mitigation; but I think he should have gone farther, and, as lawyers say, demurred to the indictment. As to Faustina, I will

merely repeat what I have already said, that there is no contemporary evidence of her misbehaving as a wife, and that historians today, who concern themselves with the matter, such as Professor Bury and Mr. Thomas Nelson Jerome, wholly reject the accusation. As to Commodus, I will amplify Julian's defence; and, in order to do this, it becomes pertinent to quote the nearest contemporary account of what took place on Marcus's death.

It will be remembered that Marcus's other sons had died, Titus, Aurelius, Aelius, Antoninus, Annius Verus, and Hadrian, and only Commodus was left, a beautiful boy, with golden hair. Marcus used to call him "my fellow soldier" and carry him in his arms to show him to the men. He had spared no pains on his education; and had he not a right to expect that his own self-denial and consecration to duty had found a lodgment in his son's heart, and in maturer years would exert beneficent influences? Commodus was naturally as free from taint as any man; Dio Cassius himself reports this. The stories told of his boyhood by Julius Capitolinus belong to the same category as the scandals he tells of Faustina. And when Silenus, presenting the chief traditional reproach, complains that Marcus bequeathed the Empire to Commodus, he must have forgotten that Marcus had already created him Augustus, and had conferred not only the consulship but also the tribunician power, chief among the imperial prerogatives, and that he had done so in compliance with the express request of the Senate: *Commodo imperium justum rogamus. Progeniem tuam robora. Commodo Antonino tribuniciam potestatem rogamus.* The Senate had been thoroughly scared by Cassius's rebellion, they feared that unless the succession of Commodus was solidly established, ambitious soldiers might start up on all sides and snatch at the crown. At that time the Senate certainly did not believe evil of Commodus. The horrible wickedness that he did afterwards confused public memory

and made sundry persons think, as wiseacres do, that they had already perceived in his father's lifetime that he was bad. The army also accepted him at once, and at first (for a very short time, it must be admitted) he acted in accordance with his father's plans and proposed to continue the war and conquer the land from the Danube to the Baltic Sea. I mention this as a bit of evidence to show that not until after his accession did Commodus's wicked character reveal itself. Very soon, however, fighting on the northern borders became irksome. "Fawning Parasites, placing their Felicity in Belly-cheere, and Brutish Lusts, did oftsoones put him in mind of the Delices of Rome." I repeat, I am not concerned with his weakness, but with the general opinion and expectation of the time. To Rome he decided to go. When it was known at Rome that he was coming, all the people were delighted, full of hope in their young Emperor, for they expected him to take after his father. (I quote Herodian.) He was welcomed and cheered all along his journey. When he came near Rome, nobles and commons went out to meet him, and strewed flowers in his path, and when they saw him they burst into acclamations, for he was very beautiful in his youthful prime, most noble to look at, with his well-made body, his strength, his handsome face, the glitter in his eye, and his hair shining in the sunlight like skeins of gold.

Such was Commodus at the time of his accession. It would hardly have been wise policy on Marcus's part to revoke all the prerogatives of sovereignty from Commodus and confer them on his son-in-law Pompeianus, an old general of foreign birth, who had married Lucilla after the death of Lucius Verus, and by that very act prompt and prick on to rebellion half a dozen rivals in the army or in the Senate who held themselves as good as he. With such a father as Marcus and such a grandfather as Antoninus Pius, no man would have believed it wise to set aside the ap-

pointed heir and put a stranger in his place. This reproach is founded on the wisdom that comes after the event.

The third reproach proceeds from a wholly different source, and requires a more elaborate explanation.

CHAPTER XVII

THE ROMAN ATTITUDE TOWARD CHRISTIANITY

MODERN Christian scholars blame Marcus Aurelius for what they term the persecutions that took place in his reign. They look back upon the Early Church, as Don Quixote looked back on the Golden Age, as a time of innocence, simplicity, brotherly love, and knowledge of the truth, *"Dichosa edad, dichosos siglos aquellos!* (that happy age, those happy times!)" Let it be granted that the picture of the early Christian community as painted in the beginning of the Book of Acts might still serve to depict life as it was among the simpler congregations, and that the majority of those early Christians were worthy of all admiration. Justin Martyr, an honest witness, in his memorial addressed to the Emperor Antoninus says: "Before we became Christians we delighted in debauchery, now we rejoice in purity of life; we used to practise magic rites and sorcery, but now we are dedicated to the good, unbegotten, God; we used to value money and possessions above everything, but now we bring together all that we own and share with everyone that needs. We used to hate one another, and kill one another, and, because of a difference of custom or nationality, we would not admit strangers within our doors, but now since the coming of Christ we all live together. We pray for our enemies; we try to win over those who hate us unjustly, so that by living in accordance with the noble precepts of Christ they may become partakers with us in the same joyful hopes of obtaining our

reward from God, the Lord of all." (*Apol.* XIV.) Aristides of Athens, in his petition to Antoninus, says even more.

Nevertheless Justin and Aristides are advocates and state their case as forcibly as they can. An opposing advocate might concede all this as to the genuine disciples of Christ, and yet he could also point to differences in dogma and mutual criticisms between disagreeing sects, (and produce witnesses, too,) as signs that brotherly love among Christians was not universal; he might submit that not all of the goodly fellowship endured to the end, but that some apostatized and some betrayed their fellows. He might also dispute the claim that Christians had knowledge of the truth. But let us grant that though Christianity could not free poor humanity from all frailty and wrongdoing, it did so then more than it does now, that it made many men and women kind, pure, and true, and some heroic, and that Justin's description of his fellow Christians, on the whole, is true. The gravamen of the modern Christian accusation against Marcus Aurelius does not lie in the fact that the Christians were innocent and good, but that he, the persecutor, was innocent and good. Their condemnation seems almost to indicate a fear lest this lack of understanding and sympathy in a man whom all the world, themselves excepted, regards as tender-hearted and prone to mercy, should cast a shadow of reproach upon the Christians of that generation. For it might be thought, by some indifferent person, that the fault did not lie exclusively with the Emperor. Some such notion may have passed through the minds of those early Christian apologists, Melito, Bishop of Sardis, and Tertullian, who say that only the wicked Emperors such as Nero and Domitian persecuted the Christians, and that under the good Emperors, Marcus included, there were no persecutions, and so evade the dilemma. On the other hand, Melito and Tertullian may have spoken out of ignorance. But let us assume that the Christians were innocent and good; yet it cannot

be contended that they were law-abiding, and therefore I take exception to the word *persecution*. However heroic, however admirable, the Christians may have been, the application of the word *persecution* to the customary enforcement of the criminal law, does violence to the ordinary use of language. The law was cruel, the society from which it issued was brutalized, the public opinion on which it was based was wholly erroneous, all this may be granted; but it does not alter the fact that the proceedings against the Christians, of which the modern apologists complain, (for they would scarcely hold an Emperor responsible for an outbreak of mob violence in Smyrna, let us say, or Lyons,) were, according to the Roman constitution, conducted with due process of law. The charge against Marcus Aurelius is that he suffered the criminal law to take its course.

The result was tragic enough, and not for the Christians only. The early Christians were a very fortunate people. They had the greatest of human possessions, the belief in a personal God and a passionate love for him. "Blessed are ye," their God had said, "when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven" (St. Matt. v, 11-12). And they did rejoice exceedingly: "My beloved is mine, and I am his." But the obverse of this picture has no rejoicing. In the *Meditations* there is this pathetic passage: "If a man stand beside a spring of clear fresh water and utter curses upon it, the spring does not stop welling up pure water for him to drink; and if he should throw mud into it and filth, it will quickly scatter them away, purify them, and not be one whit less clear and fresh. How then shall I possess myself of a *spring* and not a mere cistern?" (M. A. VIII, 51.) A very little rearrangement of history might, it would seem, have permitted Marcus Aurelius to listen with a sympathetic, if not a credulous, ear to some Christian preacher

repeating the words spoken beside Jacob's well to the woman of Samaria? "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." (St. John iv, 13-14). The meanest of his subjects had access to this living spring. The martyr Sanctus, for instance, in the midst of terrible sufferings in the amphitheatre at Lyons, although his body was "one continuous wound, mangled and shrivelled, and had entirely lost the form of man to the external eye" remained (so those who saw him said) "unsubdued and unshaken, firm in his confession, refreshed and strengthened by the celestial fountain of living water that flows from Christ." Of course it would have been impossible for a man educated as Marcus Aurelius had been, to accept the religious beliefs of this heroic martyr, but it might have been possible for him to learn that a man, not a Roman, unlettered, ignorant of philosophy, whose lot in life perhaps had been to be a slave, to hew wood and draw water, could be a hero. This, then, is the other side of the tragedy, that the Emperor, living in the midst of a society in which so much was cruel and vulgar, haunted by dim apprehensions of greater evils to come, and with personal sorrows thick at his heart, did not know that there was a great company of persons, scattered here and there in many parts of the Empire, who cherished ideals as pure as his own, many of whom were joyfully giving their lives for the very ends for which he was spending his, —to bring their wills into harmony with the divine will,— and that in what he could see nothing but low superstition (M. A. I, 6), gross habits (M. A. III, 16), and fanatical obstinacy (M. A. VIII, 48; XI, 3), there was really the same heroic self-consecration to which he had dedicated his own life. Marcus Aurelius could not, humanly speaking, have become a Christian; his spiritual task was not to fol-

low the footsteps of Jesus of Nazareth, but to set before the world the example of a man who, without the support of a supernatural creed, lived as if he were walking in the sight of a personal god.

It is now time to set before the reader the various causes which not only prevented educated Roman gentlemen, bred upon the cosmopolitan doctrines of Stoicism, from obtaining an inkling of the goodness and innocence of the Christians, but also filled their minds with all manner of evil thoughts concerning them. For it is beyond question that not only the common people, but also the most educated Romans, those farthest from the reach of prejudice, did believe the grossest calumnies. To show what those calumnies were, it will be best to cite contemporary evidence. I quote from a charming little book written at or about this time, by a distinguished advocate at the Roman bar, Minucius Felix, in which, under the guise of a discussion between two friends, Octavius, a Christian, and Caecilius, a pagan, the author presents his brief on behalf of the new religion that he himself has adopted.

The two friends, Octavius and Caecilius, together with the teller of the tale, who is to act as umpire, go down from Rome to Ostia for a holiday. The courts are not sitting, and the leisure class has left town to enjoy the vintage season after a hot summer. The friends walk along the bank of the Tiber till they reach the sea; here they sit upon a breakwater that serves to protect bathers, and, after watching boys skip sea shells over the rippling waters, they fall into a religious argument. The pagan begins by deploring the attack that has been made upon the gods by "certain fellows belonging to a sect whose case is hopeless, proscribed, and desperate. They have gathered together from the lowest dregs of the people a number of ignorant men and credulous women, always ready to believe anything, and have formed a rabble of impious conspirators. At their nocturnal gather-

ings, at their solemn fasts, and barbarous meals, not sacred rites but crimes constitute their bond of union. It is a people that lurks in darkness and shuns the light. . . . Ill weeds grow apace. These vicious habits are spreading day by day. The abominable secret haunts where these impious wretches hold their meetings are increasing in number all over the world. These execrable conspirators must be rooted out. They recognize one another by secret signs and marks! After the briefest acquaintance they love one another! A kind of religion of sensuality prevails amongst them; they call themselves promiscuously brothers and sisters, and under the cloak of these names are guilty of the most beastly offences. . . . The details of the initiation of novices are as horrible as they are well known. A baby, wrapped up in dough to deceive the unwary, is brought to the would-be novice, who, misled by the coating of dough, is induced to deal what are apparently harmless blows, and secretly stabs it to death. Then—shame on them!—they thirstily lick up the child's blood and eagerly dissect his limbs. This victim is their bond of union. Complicity in the crime is their pledge of mutual silence. Such rites are more abominable than any acts of sacrilege. What takes place at their banquets is also well known. Everybody talks about them everywhere, and the oration of our distinguished friend from Cirta confirms it. On a fixed day they assemble together, children, sisters, mothers, people of both sexes and of all ages. After much feasting, a dog fastened to the lamp is coaxed by some pieces of meat thrown to it, to spring violently beyond the length of its chain. The lamp, which would have been an inconvenient witness, is overturned and extinguished. After this, riot and indecency reign supreme. I purposely omit much: what I have already said is too much, and all or most of it is shown to be true by the very atmosphere of secrecy which surrounds this impious religion" (*Octavius,* IX, X).

The defender of the faith, Octavius, admits that before he had become a Christian he, too, believed all this. "I believed that the Christians worshipped monsters, ate the flesh of infants, and practised incest at their feasts." And he explains the stories as the invention of evil demons (do. XXVIII). "The story of our incestuous banquet is a monstrous lie, invented by a league of demons to injure us in order that our reputation for chastity should be sullied by charges of infamous and disgusting practices, and that before people had learned the truth, they should be induced to shun us, owing to the terror inspired by these unspeakable insinuations. So, too, your friend Fronto [for he was the orator from Cirta who in a public oration had repeated these calumnies against the Christians] has not given his evidence like a man who asserts a known fact, but after the manner of orators, who scatter abuse broadcast" (do. XXXI). It is useless to continue the story further.

From this book of Minucius Felix we learn that these slanders were believed by men of the highest education, position, and character, even publicly asserted by Fronto. Octavius was right; everybody told these stories everywhere. An apologist from Athens, Athenagoras, in his petition to Marcus Aurelius, admits at the outset that "common report charges us with three crimes, atheism, feasting on human flesh, and incest." Even the Epistle from the church at Lyons and Vienna to their brethren in Asia and Phrygia (A. D. 177), which describes the horrible punishments inflicted in Lyons, states that the pagan servants of the denounced Christians, under fear of torture, accused their masters of the "feasts of Thyestes" and "the incests of Oedipus," referring to the grandson of Tantalus, who unwittingly ate his own son, and to the wretched king who, also in ignorance, married his own mother. And in another defence of Christianity, again in the form of a dialogue, this time between a Christian and a Jew, Justin Martyr asks

the Jew: "Do you, like others, believe that we eat men, and when we meet after our feast put out the lights and wallow in promiscuous bestiality?" (*Dial. with Trypho,* X). And, with equal directness, Tertullian, a generation later in his *Apology,* says: "We are called the wickedest wretches on account of our sacrament of killing babies and making food of them, and on account of incest after the banquet, because the dogs overturn the lamps (our panders of darkness in good truth!) and help on the shamelessness of our impious lusts!" (*Apol.* VII.) All this I quote because it is necessary to relate the facts as they were presented to that sad, solitary, lover of justice and mercy, who instinctively drew back from this strange, innovating, oriental sect with the same disdain that he showed toward all that he understood to be degrading.

Such then was the universally accepted report. Let us now glance at the causes which kicked up so thick a dust of calumnies that, in spite of innocence, of godly lives, of memorial and apology, Romans of every class, the most educated as well as the mob, believed them with so pitiable a confidence. The attitude of the educated was based on contempt, as we know from the expressed opinions of a tolerably long list of men high in office, proconsuls and governors, a class of which scholars have said, "we can find among them examples occasionally of cruelty, occasionally of rapacity, but never of incompetence." These men looked upon the Christian dogmas, that a Jew crucified as a criminal is God, that after being dead he became alive again, as the tenets of a debased superstition, and proofs of an irrational mind. The first of these Romans to come upon the Christian dogmas was Gallio, Seneca's brother, governor of Achaia, who treated them with contempt. (Acts xviii, 12-17.) The second was Festus, governor of Judaea, who said to King Agrippa, in explaining the nature of the accusation against Paul: "There is a certain man left in bonds by Felix: about

whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me, desiring to have judgment against him. . . . Against whom when the accusers stood up, they brought none accusation of such things as I supposed: but had certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive" (Acts xxv, 15-19). And when, at the hearing in the presence of King Agrippa, Paul declared that Jesus was raised from the dead and had spoken to him from heaven, Festus exclaimed, "Paul, thou art beside thyself (Μαίνῃ, Παῦλε); much learning doth make thee mad" (Acts xxvi, 24). These mystical doctrines, which to the converts seemed doubly sacred because they were beyond the reach of a mind untouched by grace, were to the Romans sheer lunacy. Some fifty years later Tacitus, who at one time was a provincial governor, speaks of the Christian belief as a "pernicious superstition" (*superstitio exitiabilis*). Suetonius, who had served as secretary to the Emperor Hadrian, calls it a "malignant superstition" (*superstitio malefica*). Pliny, governor of Bithynia, uses the word "madness" (*amentia*) and the phrase a "degraded and gross superstition" (*superstitio prava et immodica*). The men who entertained these opinions were, as we see, of the highest rank, and some famous in literature. The Christians were well aware of this attitude of intellectual disdain. From Justin Martyr we learn that the Romans still employed the same word to describe Christian belief that Festus used to Paul; he says, "For this belief the people accuse us of madness (μανία)" (*Apol.* XIII). Minucius Felix says it was considered a "vain and crazy superstition" (*superstitio vana et demens*). This was the attitude of the educated Roman official; very much the attitude that British rulers in Egypt would take toward the Mahdi or some wild prophet from the desert. The proconsul Vigellius Saturninus, in the course of the trial of *The State* vs. *Speratus et al.*, held at Carthage

(A. D. 180), also uses the same word "madness" (μανία). Another word that the Gentiles applied to Christian dogma in St. Paul's time was μωρία, which our authorized version translates as *foolishness* (I Cor. i, 21, 23). That word, too, was employed over a hundred years later, in the reign of Marcus Aurelius. At Pergamum, in the province of Asia, the proconsul who presided at the trial in *State* vs. *Carpos et al.*, says to the prisoners, "Don't talk foolishness" (μὴ μωραίνετε); and again, in the course of the trial, he remarks that he has already "allowed them to talk a great deal of nonsense" (πολλὰ ἐάσας σε φλυαρῆσαι). Such was the opinion of all these highly trained civil servants. To them this passionate, irrational religion was a species of frenzy, possible only for uneducated, superstitious, minds of the lowest social classes.

The origin of the infamous calumnies is not quite so plain. But calumny is like a spark that needs but tinder to create a blaze. Here the fuel was ready. In the beginning, the early Christians were mostly Jews, and shared in the unpopularity of that race. Gibbon says of them, "The sullen obstinacy with which they maintained their peculiar rites and unsocial manners seemed to mark them out a distinct species of men, who boldly professed, or who faintly disguised, their implacable hatred to the rest of human kind" (*Decline and Fall*, etc., Chap. XV). And not only were the first converts to Christianity disliked by the Romans because they were Jews, but they were also hated by their fellow Jews. It was the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders, who raised the clamor that caused Jesus to be crucified, who stoned Stephen, and laid in wait to kill Paul, drove him from city to city, and haled him before magistrates. They regarded Christians as apostates, renegades, and traitors. When Paul arrived in Rome, the chief of the Jews said to him "as concerning this sect, we know that everywhere it is spoken against" (Acts xxviii, 22). And Justin records that

in the Jewish revolt under Hadrian, "Barchochebas, the ringleader, commanded that Christians should be dragged to cruel tortures, unless they would deny Jesus to be Christ, and blaspheme him" (*Apol.* XXXI). In their synagogues they used to curse the Christians, and those in authority sent out traducers and wrote letters to all nations, accusing Christians of all possible abominations, and in this way poisoned the public mind.

Such slanders found their opportunity in the secret meetings of the early disciples, in their communion rites, and in their kiss of peace; the grosser they were the more readily were they listened to, believed, and repeated. When the terrible conflagration in Nero's reign burned down a great part of Rome, and suspicion pointed to Nero, he tried to divert that suspicion to the Christians, knowing they had none to speak up for them, or perhaps the Jews accused them; and as they were not only detested, so Tacitus says, for their abominations (*flagitia*) but were also believed to hate the whole human race, Nero's cry was taken up and great numbers of the poor wretches were put to death with horrible tortures (*Annals,* XV, 44). And various causes contributed, each its share, to load the Christians with obloquy; one cause affected one group of people, another cause affected another group. Christian proselytizers broke up families. When a wife or daughter became converted, her heart went out to her new friends, and was lost to her husband or parents. Various traders, busied about the manufacture of images or some one of the many trades that ministered to the maintenance of pagan worship, felt a falling off in their business, and conceived bitter ill will against those who wrought their pecuniary losses. In Rome itself there was perhaps one added cause of suspicion against the new sect, for their liturgy, preaching, and propaganda were in Greek, which, however well known to the educated class, was an alien tongue to the populace and might well appear to conceal

that which the speakers did not wish to be understood by eavesdroppers. Besides this, the Christians held themselves aloof, as superior persons, from their fellows. They would not go to the circus or the games, for they judged circus and games to be wicked; they would not be present at festivals, for all festivals were accompanied by pagan rites; they would not accept public office, and sought to evade military service; they would not illuminate their houses when all the world else was rejoicing; they would not take oaths required in business dealings. In short they constituted a world apart and would not mix with other men. Moreover, the Christians quarrelled among themselves and in consequence of the misbehavior of certain Gnostic sects (so the Christian historian Eusebius says) "a certain impious and most absurd suspicion was spread abroad among the unbelievers respecting us, as of persons who had unlawful commerce with mothers and sisters and made use of execrable food" (*Eccles. Hist.* IV, 7). From some such causes, and in some such way, the evil reputation of Christians sprang up and reached its height in the time of Marcus Aurelius.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT

THE policy of the Roman government in matters of religion had been well established long before the accession of Marcus Aurelius. That policy was generously tolerant, not so much from motives of magnanimity as from religious indifference and political good sense. Roman citizens, indeed, owed a duty to the Roman gods who had watched over the Roman State and blessed it with victory, but the inhabitants of conquered provinces were at liberty to worship their native gods after their own fashion. The Roman religion was free from bigotry, almost wholly free, one might say, from all religious emotions, and Roman religious policy was wholly subordinate to the secular interests of an imperial state. The Roman gods were little more than symbols, vague embodiments of forces ill understood, and were cherished by the State less for the sake of private devotion than because they served as divine emblems of Roman power. In the early days of the Republic the piety of the governing class had been great, and then the Roman gods, feeling the touch of jealousy, had declared that the Romans should have none other gods but them. The course of conquest necessarily changed those early notions. Province was added to province, and gods of the conquered lands were admitted into the Roman pantheon. Some of these were discovered to be gods and goddesses whom the Romans had worshipped under other names. But whatever form the adoption or acceptance of new divinities might take, the underlying cause at work was the swelling of the Roman

State into an Empire. The old Roman gods, cold and impersonal, might satisfy a stern, self-controlled, simple people, they were inadequate to serve the needs of men and women of more ardent temperament or troubled with spiritual desires; such persons needed mystery and needed passion, and these they found in various forms of worship brought in from Egypt, Syria, and Asia Minor. And so, as the Roman power extended farther and farther, there were shiftings in the State's attitude toward religion and religious worship; new cults made their way, not only into Italy but into Rome itself. Through all these changes the pole star of Roman policy was tolerance. So far as mere worship was concerned, the subject peoples were permitted to do as they liked.

Tolerance must have its bounds; and the Roman policy of religious toleration, however broad-minded, generous, or indifferent, had certain, reasonably definite, boundary lines. The Romans never wished to constrain men's consciences; they merely insisted upon certain standards of outward conduct. Just as in India the English do not permit the ancient custom that sacrificed a widow upon the funeral pyre of her husband, so the Romans did not permit human sacrifice; they put down such practices in Africa and in Gaul. The second limitation upon liberty of worship was a prohibition of rites that either encouraged, or served as a screen for, gross immorality. This branch of policy, though not the immediate cause of the prohibition of Christianity, was closely connected with the government's action, and without doubt received the hearty support of public opinion. The best known and most dramatic instance of the application of this policy, (before the attempts to suppress Christianity,) occurred in the days of the Republic, not long after the Second Punic war, when the government interfered to put down the worship of Bacchus. The popular feelings and beliefs of that time concerning the newly introduced cult

bear a strong resemblance to the feelings and beliefs concerning Christianity in the reigns of the Antonines, and that episode therefore is the chief precedent known to us for the government's attitude toward Christianity. The episode itself is evidence of the unwritten constitution of the Empire, and enables us better to understand the attacks upon Christianity which, to Christians, who look back through centuries tinted by absolute belief in the divine origin of Christianity, appear to have arisen from a fanatical prejudice against an attempt to comfort and ennoble humanity. I quote the account given by Livy.

"This was the beginning of it. A Greek of mean condition, ignorant of all the arts which the most learned of nations has imparted to us for the culture of our minds and bodies, a poor sort of priest, a soothsayer, came to Etruria. He was not one of those who with public ritual openly preach their teaching and practice, and thereby stir men's souls with profound emotion, but a priest of secret and midnight rites. At first the initiations were confined to a few; then they began to spread far and wide, both among men and women. In addition to the religious ritual there was drinking and feasting, in order to attract more and more neophytes. When wine had excited them, what with night, both sexes together, and most of them young, no shred of modesty was left. Debaucheries of every kind began, for all found ready at hand whatever voluptuous temptation nature had inclined them to. And this one kind of vice—that between free-born men and common women—was not all; but from this same storehouse issued forth false witnesses, fabrications and forgeries, counterfeit tokens, and so on. From there, too, came poisonings and assassinations. . . . This wicked contagion, just like a disease that spreads, issuing from Etruria infected Rome. At first it lay hidden, because a great city, by its very size is able to lodge and endure much evil; but after a time knowledge of it reached the Consul." [The

Consul made investigations, discovered that these were Bacchanalian rites, and having called the people to the forum, addressed them as follows:]

" 'Romans, never before have our people, met together, had a more fit, a more necessary, occasion to supplicate the gods, or to remember that they are the gods whom our forefathers acknowledged, for worship, veneration, and prayer; not strange gods who infatuate men's minds with debased, outlandish rites, and drive them, as if goaded by the furies, to every kind of wickedness and vice.

" 'I cannot tell how far to speak out and how far to hold my tongue. If I leave you not fully informed, I may become responsible for scanting proper precautions; if I lay the whole matter bare, I fear lest I should terrify you too much. Whatever I may say, rest assured that it is less than would be justified by the atrociousness and magnitude of the evil. We shall take great pains to take the necessary steps of prevention.

" 'I am sure that you already know by report, and also by the noises and shrieks which resound through the city at night, that Bacchanalian rites have been practised in every part of Italy, and now in many parts of Rome itself; but you do not know what the Bacchanalian rites mean. Some of you think it some kind of worship of the gods, others that it is a rather riotous sport that does not violate the law, and whatever it is, affects only a few people.

" 'As to their numbers, if I tell you that there are many thousands, I think you would be greatly scared, unless I also told you who and what they are. First, then, a great part of them are women, and that was the source of the evil; the men are of the foulest kind, half mad with their wine, and their midnight clanging and banging. Up to now the sect still is weak, but it will become very strong indeed, because more adherents join every day. Your ancestors never allowed the people to hold meetings on casual pre-

texts; either the flag was hung out on the citadel, and the troops called out for elections, or the tribunes summoned the plebeians, or some magistrate called the people together. They thought that wherever there was a crowd, the lawful ruler of the crowd should be present.

" 'But what kind are these meetings, do you suppose, held at midnight, men and women mixed together? If you knew how young the boys are initiated, you would not only feel pity but shame. Romans, do you think that young men initiated by such an oath of fealty are fit to be made soldiers? Do you think weapons should be entrusted to men marching forth from such a temple of beastliness? Shall these fellows, tainted by their own and their comrades' debauches, draw the sword to defend the honor of your wives and daughters?

" 'Never was there so great an evil in the State, nor one that affected so many people and so many things. Whatever wicked act of late years, of lust or crime, has been done, you may be sure it comes from that one religious sect. And they have not yet perpetrated all the crimes for which they united. This criminal sect as yet confines itself to private wrongs, because it is not yet strong enough to attack the State. But the evil increases and spreads daily. It is already too great for private citizens to check it, and it expects to dominate the State,' " etc., etc.

The consul's speech called out a sympathetic response. A policy of repression was adopted. Seven thousand persons were arrested, and more than half punished with death. The Senate enacted a decree that "no Bacchanalian rites should be celebrated in Rome or in Italy" (Livy, XXXIX, Chaps. 8-17).

Here, then, three hundred and more years before, was the ancestral precedent, almost the counterpart, of the agitation, alarm, and contempt which the Roman world felt for the Christians. In each case a foreign sect, insolent to the Ro-

man gods, and ambitious to dominate the State, setting at nought Roman usages and Roman prejudices, introduced a strange ritual and a mysterious creed, taught a god who transcended human experience and a worship that contradicted reason, and in dark corners and secret assemblies wrought upon the emotions of the uneducated and especially of women. In each case ignorance, contempt, and fear imagined horrible things. Nor was the application of this precedent unreasonable, for in the worship of Bacchus and the worship of Christ, there were some elements of similarity, such as a conviction deeper than reason, a sentiment of human and superhuman power mingled, magical and mystical, and at times a complete abandonment to the less comprehensible impulses of the divine spirit. *The Bacchae* of Euripides indicates something of this. Both religions made the same general impression on the populace. The policy of the government was dictated by its secular interests, by the lack of sympathy in the upper classes, and by the superstitions and prejudices of the uneducated, and with time gained fresh strength and solidity. It seems to have become so firmly established that it did not need to be embodied in statute law, but remained a part of the unwritten constitution as a police regulation rather than as an interference in religious matters, and as I have said, constituted the second exception to the general Roman policy of religious toleration.

In addition to these limitations upon liberty of worship, the Roman State exacted evidence of loyalty from its subject peoples; and as the Roman gods were the political emblems of the State, all subjects were obliged to express their allegiance by acts of worship toward those gods. To the Romans themselves, indifferent or skeptical, such required acts were political; and all peoples of polytheistic religions accepted this view and were perfectly willing to burn incense on the altars of any gods, especially of gods

so powerful as the gods of Rome. They did not renounce their own religion, they were not asked to do that; they were merely constrained to fulfill the imperial obligation of acknowledging the political sovereignty of Rome by acts of adoration to its gods.

One factor in the situation needs more particular mention. With the establishment of the Empire a new element had been introduced into the Roman religion. The Emperors, after death, were deified; Divus Julius, Divus Augustus, and others were acknowledged to be divine powers who, enthroned beside Jupiter Capitolinus and Mars Gradivus, would continue to keep watch and ward over the Roman Empire. In the popular imagination this apotheosis was no very violent metamorphosis, for during their lives the Emperors had seemed to be omnipotent. The practice of apotheosis came from the East, but the ideas on which it rested were already in the air, and the worship of the people preceded official recognition by the State. It has endured, in a modified form under the term *canonization,* in the Roman Catholic Church, down to today. And the idea, however strange it may appear when baldly stated, is familiar enough in the ordinary practice among Christians of invoking a blessing from the dead upon the surviving members of a family. And the Romans, too, in their homes, from a similar spirit of gratitude, of affection, and of unwillingness to believe that that force which once had manifested itself with beneficence and tenderness in a father or a husband, had utterly gone beyond the reach of prayers, were accustomed to offer special reverence and a simple worship *Dis Manibus* (to the divine souls of the dead). So the Emperors were officially ranged among the spiritual powers that watched over the Empire, and naturally, even more than the old Roman gods, became the acknowledged symbols of the State; and all persons, both Romans and inhabitants of subject lands, were obliged to manifest their political alle-

giance to Rome by public acknowledgment of the new gods, to burn incense on their altars, to invoke their intervention, or to swear "by the genius of Caesar." One form of this new worship was the cult of Rome and of the reigning sovereign, usually known as the cult of *Rome and Augustus*. This cult was received with enthusiasm and spread through the provinces of the Empire, east and west. It had its priesthood and its ritual; and no polytheist thought of protesting. In the principal city of the province a temple to *Rome and Augustus* was built, and there, once a year it seems, delegates from the larger provincial towns used to meet; they performed sacrifices in the temple, celebrated games, and transacted certain business assigned to them. In this way the cult was fostered, and the deified Emperors took their places among the Roman gods. Acceptance of these gods, Emperors and others, was in Roman eyes a mere recognition of the authority of the Roman State, and refusal to worship them, not in the spirit but by throwing incense on the altar, constituted disloyalty and treason, and the man who persisted in refusal defied the authority of Rome and proclaimed himself a traitor and a public enemy. Mommsen says: "The national religion was the foundation . . . of the *Roma communis omnium patria*, the spiritual symbol of political union . . . and it has always to be borne in mind that every [lawyer] must have ranged contempt of the public gods among the crimes deserving death, and it was a sheer impossibility in principle for any Roman statesman to accord to those guilty of it even toleration."

So far as this policy in respect to the compulsory worship of the gods of the Empire affected people believing in polytheism it was perfectly successful. The conquered nations accepted the authority of Rome; they were usually grateful for peace and public order, and a few gods more or less was no great matter. But among the nations subject to Rome was a peculiar people. The Jews presented a novel problem.

They constituted a nation, but they did not live together within national boundaries; many home-keeping Jews dwelt in Judaea, but a greater number were scattered abroad in the cities of Asia Minor, of Greece, as well as in Alexandria and elsewhere. The bond that held them together was their religion. This religion could not mingle, and would not compromise, with another religion, as polytheistic creeds were ready to do; it asserted that it alone was true and that all other religions were false. The Romans were puzzled as to what to do, and their policy shifted according to the political exigencies of the immediate occasion; they wished to avoid quarrels, and under one pretext or another, reverted to the general principle of toleration, agreed to a sort of concordat, let the Jews maintain their own ways and customs, and excused them from compliance with the imperial cult. This policy, however, failed signally, whether the failure was due to the inherent antagonism between love of national independence and imperial suzerainty, or to other causes; and the Jews rebelled time and again. The long war under Vespasian ended in the capture of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple (A. D. 70). Before the close of Trajan's reign, the Jews rose, and perpetrated frightful massacres in Mesopotamia, Babylonia, Cyrene, and Cyprus; the revolt was put down in a deluge of blood. Under Hadrian war broke out again; Jerusalem was virtually destroyed and the Roman city of Aelia Capitolina built upon its ruins. Again, in the reign of Antoninus Pius there were further revolts. Apart from these rebellions the Jews were personally unattractive to the Romans, as Juvenal, Persius, Tacitus, and others bear witness. It is even said that Marcus Aurelius, when he visited Palestine toward the end of his reign, wearied out by the rebellious spirit and the uncleanliness of the Jews, cried out, "O Marcomanni! O Quadi! O Sarmatians! I have at last found others worse than you!"

During this same period, while the government was fol-

lowing a policy of opportunism in its dealings with a monotheistic nation, it found itself also called upon to formulate a policy toward a monotheistic sect which disclaimed all nationality. At first the practices, beliefs, and sentiments of this new sect seemed to be akin to those of the Jewish religion, and the problem, which it presented, seemed a sort of corollary to the Jewish problem. The new sect claimed to be the sole possessor of truth; it was intolerant; it was obstinate; it denounced the Roman deities as demons or fictions; it acknowledged, as it seemed, two gods, a supreme god and one Christ, a crucified Jew. It turned out to be Jewish in origin but no further, and to have no nationality to give it a local habitation and confine it within national boundaries. Its rites were secret and mysterious, and it made proselytes chiefly among women, slaves, and the lowest orders of society. Very soon all real knowledge of the new sect was totally obliterated by the clouds of slander and misinformation that hung thick about it. But one fact was clear beyond all question, the new sect was at odds with well-established laws of the Empire. The fundamental tenets of Christianity asserted that the Roman gods were false, Divus Julius, Divus Augustus, and the rest were fantasies of family pride or imperial policy, and constrained all its believers to refuse to sacrifice on pagan altars or to swear by the genius of Caesar. This was absolute defiance of the established order, and rendered Christians subject to capital punishment as traitors to their imperial allegiance and atheists toward the imperial religion, in short as public enemies, like pirates and brigands, wholly beyond the protection of the law. And, in addition to all this, as a minor offence, the organization of the new sect into congregations was a further violation of law. From the time of Julius Caesar the imperial government showed itself suspicious of secret societies, fearing lest they become centres of conspiracy, and had forbidden all persons to unite and form guilds,

corporations, or clubs without special license. Trade guilds, approved by long custom, and funeral colleges were authorized; special privileges of meeting together in their synagogues were also granted to the Jews. But the government was always jealous of the privilege, believing, as the Emperor Trajan wrote to Pliny, "No matter what name we give them, and no matter what our object in giving it, men bound together in a union very soon become a political club." The Christian congregations were unlicensed, and in meeting broke the law of the land.

The new religion, however, cared little about these things. It deemed itself called to a higher business; it set its heart on proselytizing and recked little of the law. The government merely perceived that here was one more oriental sect, whose members, whether sinning or sinned against, gave occasion to many breaches of the peace. But little beginnings waxed and prospered, and by the opening of the second century, this new sect, sprung from the Jews and yet hated by the Jews, homeless, ubiquitous, secret, arrogant, increased mightily in numbers, and forced itself upon the notice of the Roman official world as a troublesome subject for political consideration. After the government's experience with the Jews, it was not likely that a policy of bearing with an intolerant religion, and excusing its adherents from the obligation of acknowledging the religious symbols of imperial authority, would again find favor. It believed the reports of immorality and vice, and determined to follow the traditional policy adopted against the worshippers of Bacchus.

In spite of the industry and ingenuity of scholars there is no definite information as to the nature and origin of the particular laws or edicts in which the government embodied this policy. No statute, no decree of universal application has been discovered. But reports of various trials, letters, and sundry scraps of information, tell what happened.

Sometimes the Roman magistrates acted under their general duty to keep the peace or seize outlaws; sometimes they sat in judgment upon formal accusations. But whatever the statutes or edicts may have been, by the beginning of the second century, the Christian sect had excited so much hatred and abhorrence, and had acquired a reputation for infamy and crime, so confirmed, so solid, and free from excuse or palliation, comparable, for instance, to that in British history of the proscribed clan of the MacGregors, that the law regarded the mere fact of acknowledged membership a capital offence. To profess the name of Christian meant death; no other proof of treason, atheism, or crime of any sort was necessary. One may well suppose that among the ignorant, fanatical, and emotional peoples of Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia, and Pontus, there may well have been many new converts who, burning with zeal to secure for themselves the sacred benediction, "Blessed are ye, when men shall . . . cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake" (Luke vi, 22), not only persisted in glorifying the name of Christian, but also crammed into it a mortal defiance of all that the rest of the world believed in and held sacred, and stirred their unconverted neighbors to an equally passionate indignation. Probably those neighbors brought the offenders before the magistrates, and insisted on an enforcement of the law. But though the mob may have originated and cried out for the punishment of Christians, one must not jump to the conclusion that Roman law was indifferent to the rights of the accused. The evidence, even from Christian sources is quite to the contrary. Festus says: "It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have licence to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him" (Acts xxv, 16). And Tertullian says, "Your practice is not hastily to condemn men without an indictment and a defence" (*Ad Nationes*, II, 2).

The first certain information of the position of a Roman Emperor upon the matter comes from Trajan's famous letter, written, probably about 112 A. D., in answer to a request for instructions from Pliny the Younger, who at that time was governor of Bithynia. Great numbers of Christians had been held for trial before Pliny, who had had no previous experience of such criminal cases, and seems to have known but little concerning the sect. Upon investigation, as he writes to the Emperor, he found that "the infectious superstition" had spread all over, from cities and villages to remote farms, and had laid hold upon persons of both sexes, of every age, and of all ranks. His procedure at the trials was this: He asked the prisoner if he were a Christian; if the prisoner said he was, Pliny warned him of the penalty and repeated his question a second and third time. If the prisoner persisted in asserting that he was a Christian, he was ordered away to death; for Pliny felt no doubt that whatever his particular offences, such contumacy deserved the extreme penalty of the law. The prisoners who denied the charge were required to invoke the gods, to offer incense before the Emperor's statue, and to curse Christ. Those who were willing to apostatize said they had done nothing worse than to meet together before daybreak and sing hymns to Christ as God, and to bind themselves by an oath not to steal, or rob, or commit adultery, or betray a trust. After this early service they went their several ways and met again later in the day to partake of simple food; but they had even given up this practice after Pliny, in fulfillment of the Emperor's orders, had forbidden all unauthorized associations. Pliny asked the Emperor's wishes on various points, and in particular, as to punishment and investigation, and, whether "the name itself is to be punished, even if there is no evidence of abominations, or whether the abominations which are necessarily implied in the name are

to be punished" (Pliny's Letters, X, 96). To this letter asking counsel the Emperor replied:

My dear Pliny:

You have done just what you ought in your disposition of those cases concerning those who were accused before you of being Christians. It is impossible to lay down any definite form of procedure as of universal application. No search is to be made for them. If they are accused and convicted they must be punished; with this proviso, that if the accused deny that he is a Christian and prove it by his acts, that is, by worshipping the gods, then his repentance will entitle him to pardon, although in the past he may have been subject to suspicion. Anonymous accusations must have no weight. That would be a most pernicious precedent and is contrary to the spirit of the age in which we live" (Pliny's Letters, X, 97).

Whether Trajan followed some law or precedent unknown to us, or whether he decided Pliny's questions in accordance with what he believed to be the proper policy, traditional or not, of the Roman government, the rules that he approved are clear and simple. If the accused professed to be a Christian, he was to be warned and given a *locus penitentiae;* if he remained obdurate, he was to be punished. If he denied that he was a Christian, or renounced his membership in the sect, all he need do was to swear by the genius of the Emperor, burn incense on the altars of the Roman gods, or perform some such ceremony, and he would be set free. The punishment was crucifixion, or to be thrown to wild beasts, or to be burned, or, in the case of persons of a certain rank, to be beheaded. These cruel punishments were not specially devised for use against the Christians, they were customary among the Romans for great crimes, such as arson in the city, burglary of a temple, desertion from the army, or murder of near relations.

Such was the criminal procedure for the crime of Christianity. Reports of cases that have come down to us show that it was followed during the reigns of Trajan, Hadrian, and Antoninus Pius. In Trajan's reign Christians were executed at Antioch and Philippi as well as in Bithynia. The Emperor Hadrian, in a rescript sent to the governor of the province of Asia, did indeed hedge in the law by some cautious restriction, without however altering its substance. He was fearful lest injustice be done to the innocent by false accusers or by the passions of the mob, and directed the governor himself to examine legal accusations and inflict the proper penalty. Antoninus Pius issued instructions to various cities in Greece and Thrace, forbidding any riotous procedure against the Christians; but executions were frequent. The most famous case in his reign is that of the noble old Polycarp, who was put to death in Smyrna, and others with him. At his trial, the proconsul wishing to save him, said, "Curse Christ and I will set you free," and Polycarp answered, "Eighty and six years have I served Him and He never did me wrong; and how can I now blaspheme my king, who has saved me?" In Athens, Publius, the bishop, was put to death, and various persons are known to have suffered in Rome. In all these condemnations it was a well-recognized rule of the Roman law that the mere acknowledgment of the name of Christian constituted a capital offence.

Such was the situation when Marcus Aurelius began his reign.

CHAPTER XIX

ENFORCEMENT OF THE LAW

IN the reign of Marcus Aurelius the situation was rapidly changing. The numbers of the Christians multiplied; persons of education, both men and women of the upper class, became converts. The sect felt a premonition of its coming power, and many seem to have confessed their religion publicly and proudly. In consequence Christians were not merely regarded with hatred, but in that hatred may be discovered, I think, an element of fear, as if the pagans felt the presence of something magical, dangerous, or unclean. Such persons as were ripe for the new teaching, and felt that it might contain the truth for them, were taught the gospels, and were converted. The rest had no inkling of the good and the beautiful that lay beneath what seemed to them so gross and repulsive, so obstinate and arrogant; they never read the gospels, the psalms, or Isaiah; they never knew the wonderful grace of Jesus' life nor the charm of his words; they thought nothing but evil of the new sect. The name of Christian was an abomination to them; and they believed the Christians were as obnoxious to the gods as to themselves. On the happening of a public calamity the populace pitched on the Christians as the cause. Tertullian said: "The Christians are blamed for every public disaster, every misfortune that happens to the people. If the Tiber overflows its banks, if the Nile remains within its bed, if no rain falls, or if there is earthquake, famine, or plague, at once there's a cry 'Throw the Christians to the lions'" (*Apol.* 40). And in the reign of Marcus Aurelius all these calamities befell in quick succession. The Tiber

overflowed and caused a famine; a few years later the plague swept over the Empire, and smouldered on for years, breaking out at different times and places. The legionaries in Britain revolted. The Parthians invaded the eastern provinces; the Barbarians burst down across the Danube. The Roman world, accustomed to peace and ease, winced, and more than winced, under these blows. The Emperor, with the fortitude of his race and creed, confronted the evils, and manfully opposed them: but the populace, ignorant, volatile, superstitious, prone to panic and terror, sought for a sacrifice to appease the anger of the gods. Designing persons, perhaps following the example set by Nero, or earlier still, by the high priests of Jerusalem, stirred their suspicions against the Christians. The mob was easily aroused; so it had been with St. Paul on several occasions, so it was with Polycarp and his fellow martyrs, so it was in the province of Asia when the Emperor Hadrian wrote his rescript. The mob cried out its denunciations, and the magistrates, very likely in order to save Christians from violence, took them into custody. On other occasions, informers eager for blood money, or personal enemies, or injured tradesmen, went before the magistrates and made the complaint. There was little or no official hunting after Christians, no inquisition. Trajan had expressly forbidden this, and his successors followed his policy. Except where the mob, or individual accusers, compelled the magistrates to act, Christians seem to have been left undisturbed. Apologists wrote memorials to several Emperors in which they boldly avowed themselves Christians, and they were not touched. For instance, there were Aristides (of Athens) and Quadratus in the reign of Hadrian, Justin in the reign of Antoninus Pius, Claudius Apollinaris, Melito, and Athenagoras in that of Marcus Aurelius, as well as such writers as Theophilus of Antioch, Minucius Felix, Tatian, and a little later Tertullian. And the rigor of the law was not always

enforced. Athenagoras speaks of a fine as the punishment. In Lyons, before the mob riots of 177, Christians were merely forbidden to go to the baths, or the market-place, or show themselves in public, a prohibition without doubt intended to prevent mob violence. And at the trial at Lyons, one prisoner, Vettius Epagathus, as it seems, went scot free. In Italy thousands, in place of capital punishment, were sent to work the mines in Sardinia. And all the trials show that the judges wished to save the prisoners' lives. They urged them to recant, offered a respite that they might think it over, or *blando colloquio* (with persuasive words), tried to induce them to apostatize. But when once a case came to trial the procedure laid down by Trajan was strictly followed.

The first case in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, of which a report has come down to us, is that of the *State* vs. *Justin and others*. As Justin had submitted an apology on behalf of the Christians to Antoninus Pius without being molested, there is some reason to give credence to the story that a personal enemy, a Cynic philosopher, laid the charge against him. He and his comrades were brought to trial before the City Prefect. At this time that office was held by Junius Rusticus, who in earlier days had been tutor to Marcus Aurelius, and now was constrained by his imperial master to forsake his books and take public office. His character appears from what his teaching laid stress upon: on doing a thing right, on watching over the health of character, on simplicity, on being quickly reconciled after a disagreement, on not reading superficially, and on not yielding assent too readily to what a glib talker may say. The relation of tutor and pupil had long passed, but the two men were close friends; Marcus revered Rusticus, and Rusticus, as Fronto said, would "give his life for Marcus's little finger nail." Nevertheless, neither entertained a blind admiration for the other. By this time Rusticus had become a personage of

importance, and his judgment had great weight in domestic matters and in foreign policy. And though it seems probable that he, a thorough Roman, a Stoic, a man of disciplined mind, held opinions similar to those of Fronto's concerning Christians, it would have been impossible to have had a more upright judge. The report of the trial, which I give, shows that he administered justice according to the law.

State vs. *Justin et al.*

When the prisoners were arraigned before the judgment seat, Rusticus addressed Justin.

PREFECT: Your first duty is to believe in the gods and to obey your Emperor.

JUSTIN: It is not right that we are accused and rebuked because we obey the commands of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

THE PREFECT: What doctrines do you profess?

JUSTIN: I have tried to learn all doctrines, but I adhere to the true doctrines of the Christians, although they are not acceptable to those who have wrong ideas.

THE PREFECT: Wretched man, are those doctrines acceptable to you?

JUSTIN: Yea, verily, since I follow them in correctness of belief.

THE PREFECT: What is that belief?

JUSTIN: We worship the God of the Christians, whom we believe to be One from the beginning, Creator and Maker of all things visible and invisible, and our Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, of whom it was foretold by the prophets that he would come to preach salvation to mankind and to be the Master of noble disciples. But I, man that I am, recognize that all I can say is but a little thing in comparison with his infinite godhead; but indeed prophecies have been foretold of him who, as I said just now, is the Son of God.

THE PREFECT: Where do you hold your meetings?

JUSTIN: Wherever we wish to, and can. But by no means

imagine that we all meet in the same place. Not at all; for the God of the Christians is not circumscribed, but though he is unseen he fills the heaven and the earth, and he is worshipped and glorified by the faithful everywhere.

THE PREFECT: Tell me, where is it that you meet, in what place do you assemble your disciples?

JUSTIN: I am staying upstairs in the house of one Martin, near Timothy's bathhouse, and all this time (for this is the second time I have come to Rome) I have known of no other meeting place than that. And when anybody wished to come to me I have imparted to him the doctrine of truth.

THE PREFECT: So, then, you are a Christian?

JUSTIN: Yea, verily, I am a Christian.

The Prefect then turned to Chariton.

PREFECT: Come, tell me, Chariton, are you a Christian?

CHARITON: I am a Christian by the ordination of God.

The Prefect then turned to Charito, a woman.

PREFECT: And what do you say, Charito?

CHARITO: I am a Christian by the gift of God.

Then Rusticus turned to Euelpistus.

PREFECT: And what are you?

EUELPISTUS: A slave of Caesar's; I, too, am a Christian, made free by Christ, and by the grace of Christ, I share in the same hope.

Rusticus then addressed Hierax.

PREFECT: Are you too a Christian?

HIERAX: Verily I am a Christian, for I worship and adore the same God.

THE PREFECT: Did Justin make you Christians?

HIERAX: I was a Christian and I shall be.

And Paeon standing up said: I also am a Christian.

THE PREFECT: Who was it that taught you?

PAEON: We learned this noble confession from our parents.

And EUELPISTUS said: I used to listen with joy to the

words of Justin, and I too learned to be a Christian from my parents.

THE PREFECT: Where are your parents?

EUELPISTUS: In Cappadocia.

THE PREFECT (to Hierax): Where are your parents?

HIERAX: Our true father is Christ, and our mother is faith in Him; but my earthly parents are dead, and I have come here dragged away from Iconium in Phrygia.

THE PREFECT (to Liberianus): And what have you to say? Are you a Christian, haven't you either any sense of religion?

LIBERIANUS: I too am a Christian, because I am religious and I worship the only true God.

THE PREFECT (to Justin): Listen, you who say you are learned and believe that you know the true doctrine, do you believe you are going to heaven when you are flogged and beheaded?

JUSTIN: I hope that I shall receive His reward, if I endure these things; I know that to all who have lived in this way the divine grace will abide until the end of the whole world.

THE PREFECT: Then you think that you will ascend to heaven and will receive some reward?

JUSTIN: I do not think, but I know and am fully assured of it.

PREFECT: Well, let us get on to the immediate business that lies before us. Come here all together, and with one accord sacrifice to the gods!

JUSTIN said: No right thinking man falls away from piety into impiety.

THE PREFECT: If you do not obey, you will be punished without mercy.

JUSTIN answered: Through our prayers we know that though we be punished we shall be saved by our Lord Jesus Christ, for this will be our salvation and our trust before the more terrible judgment seat of our Lord and Master.

And the other martyrs spoke in the like manner: Do what you will! for we be Christians and will not sacrifice to idols.

And Rusticus the Prefect pronounced sentence saying: Let those who refuse to sacrifice to the gods and obey the commands of the Emperor, be flogged and be conducted to capital punishment according to the provisions of the law.

On reading the report of this trial, it seems obvious that the judge is following a well-settled procedure of criminal law. No evidence is necessary, and none is produced, beyond the confession of the prisoners. The only difference between this and a trial for sacrilege, murder, or arson, is that the prisoners, instead of denials or excuses, glory in the accusation brought against them. The reports of other trials are very much the same. *The State* vs. *Carpos, Papylos and Agathonice* was tried in the city of Pergamum, in the province of Asia, before the proconsul. As usual, the prisoners asserted that they were Christians and would not save themselves by recantation, although they were subjected to torture, according to the practice, not as punishment, but in order to induce them to recant and save their lives. Harnack comments upon the extreme patience of the judge in listening to the discourses of the prisoners. *The State* vs. *Namphamo* was tried in Africa before the proconsul Vigellius Saturninus (180 A. D.); the defendant resided in Medaura but I presume that the trial took place at Carthage. The case of *The State* vs. *Speratus and eleven others,* was also tried at Carthage two weeks later (July 17, 180 A. D.) before the same proconsul, and with the same procedure. In this case the prisoners were offered a respite of thirty days in which to reconsider their refusal to offer incense on the altars of the gods, but they all declined to accept it.

Other Christians, according to Eusebius, were executed at various places, Thraseas, a bishop, at Smyrna, Sagaris, also a bishop, at Laodicea, Papirius and Melito at Sardis

(perhaps in 164 A. D.). It may be that Felicitas, a Roman matron, and several children were executed in Rome (162 A. D. ?), as well as Caecilia, also a Roman lady, and others with her (177-180 A. D. ?); but the facts as to Felicitas and Caecilia are wrapped in uncertainties. In addition to these cases there are references by various Christians of the time, Justin, Minucius Felix, Melito (quoted by Eusebius), Athenagoras, and Theophilus of Antioch, to sufferings of the Christians; so it seems likely that attacks from the populace were frequent, even if trials were not. The most famous episode in this list of tragedies took place in the city of Lyons, where Christians from the provinces of Asia Minor had founded a congregation. Eusebius of Caesarea, the Christian historian, who lived in the time of Constantine, reports it. In the prologue he says: "Others who write history record nothing but victorious battles, trophies won from the foe, feats of generals, and the bravery of soldiers who, for the sake of children, country, and what riches else besides, have stained themselves with blood and thousands killed; but mine is the story of a polity according to the will of God, of peaceful wars waged that the soul might have peace, and of those who in such wars have borne themselves like men not for the sake of country but of truth, not for the sake of friends, but of righteousness." With this introduction, he proceeds to tell the sufferings of those who suffered for the faith in Gaul, and quotes at length from a letter written by "the servants of Christ dwelling at Lyons and Vienna in Gaul, to those brethren in Asia and Phrygia having the same faith and hope." How or what stirred the populace is not told, but the mob set upon the Christians, of whom many were arrested, perhaps in order to save them, and cast into prison. All the zealous members of the two churches were taken. Their domestic slaves, when put to torture, accused their masters of the worst crimes believed of them, devouring children, incest,

and such. Hearing this the mob could hardly be held back from lynching the prisoners. Before the governor the only charge alleged against them was that they were Christians; and in this accusation the prisoners gloried. They were condemned, and many of them horribly tortured. The governor was in doubt as to the proper procedure toward those who were Roman citizens, and apparently also toward those who had apostatized, and wrote to the Emperor for instructions. The Emperor replied that if any would renounce Christianity they should be set free, but that Roman citizens who would not renounce should be beheaded. The others, according to the criminal code, were thrown to the beasts. It is said that the victims numbered forty-eight. And with this dreadful, but glorious, episode the pitiful story of the struggle of paganism with Christianity during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, virtually comes to an end. The only evidence there is that Marcus Aurelius had any direct relation with any of these cases, is this statement in Eusebius that during the trial at Lyons the governor wrote to ask him for instructions. The governor must have stated the facts that appeared in evidence; just as Pliny had done in his report to Trajan. The prisoners belonged to the outlawed sect of Christians, they avowed the fact and defied the State, they would not sacrifice to the Roman gods, or publicly acknowledge the majesty of the Emperor, and, according to the testimony of their slaves, they were guilty of the most abominable crimes. One can imagine under what circumstances the request for instructions reached the Emperor on the Barbarian border. Perhaps that day he had inspected raw troops at Carnuntum, or had superintended the transportation of supplies from Vindobona to the camps down the river, or had led a foray across the Danube against the Jazyges, riding over desert and through morass, or was in camp at Sirmium trying a case on appeal from Athens or Alexandria; perhaps a dozen other messengers were wait-

ing, their horses saddled and bridled, to take back imperial rescripts to the commander of the legion at York, to the governor of Tarraconensis, to the proconsul in Africa, or to the general-in-chief on the Euphrates; while a swarm of aides, office-seekers, purveyors, chafed in impatient attendance, all clamoring, flattering, and bribing, in their efforts to pass the guards and enter the imperial tent. That day, perhaps, he had had no food except his drugs, and his emaciated body was struggling through its work under the goad of his heroic soul. Nevertheless, one cannot doubt but that he proceeded with due deliberation. He answered, just as Trajan had done sixty-five years before; the law must take its course; those who would acknowledge their allegiance to the Roman government in the usual way were to be set free, the others must undergo the established penalty.

These, then, are the instances of judicial condemnations and of mob violence during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, of which there is any definite report. It is a sad story and the sorrow of it is increased by our knowledge of how much the Christians and Marcus Aurelius possessed in common, how near they were of kin, differing little more than in this, that the Christians believed that they had found the way, the light, and the life, which the Stoics were seeking. Both felt the inadequacy of transitory things to satisfy the needs of the inner self, and reached out for the spiritual power that, as one sect believed, and the other reasoned, must govern the universe. Both were ready to bend their wills in submission to an almighty will; both could say:

> Our wills are ours, we know not how;
> Our wills are ours, to make them thine.

The Stoics were children of reason and the Christians children of faith, and so the language of one is that of reason and the language of the other that of faith, and therefore there is a beauty and ardor in the Christian phrases that

distinguish them from the Stoic phrases, but except for that beauty and that ardor they are often very much the same. Marcus Aurelius says to God, "Give what Thou wilt, take back what Thou wilt" (M. A. X, 14); but Job says, "The LORD gave and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD." The difference is inherent in the difference of their attitude; the one speaks in prose, the other in poetry. "If you wish to propitiate the gods, be good; true worship is to imitate them." "What doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" *Deo parere libertas est,*—His service is perfect freedom. *Animus nisi purus ac sanctus est Deum non capit,*—Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God. *Qui dedit beneficium taceat,*—Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth. But put the poetry of beauty and fervor aside and the maxims and counsels of a better life are often the same. *Vivere militare est,*—This life is a warfare. *Receda in te quantum potes,*—Sink into thy soul. *Nec domum esse hoc corpus sed hospitium et quidem breve hospitium, quod relinquendum est ubi te gravem hospiti videas,*—Thy body is not thy home but an inn and but for short tarrying, and thou must leave when thy time is up.

There was in both a yearning to be healed by their religion, and the Stoic used to turn to the philosopher, to advise and guide him, as the Christian turned to his priest. Both set apart an evening hour in which to meditate over their failures and shortcomings during the day. Both believed in asceticism and self-denial, and felt that those whom the world calls happy are not happy. Both believed in gentleness, humility, fraternity; both that a man must do good to his neighbor. The Stoics had no parable of the Good Samaritan, but Marcus Aurelius says, "It is a man's duty to love even those that stumble and fall" (M. A. VII, 22); *Φίλησον τὸ ανθρώπινον γένος* (Love your fellow men) (M. A. VII, 31).

Both, in the teeth of their own fundamental dogma of a great first cause, asserted that God is not responsible for evil; and both held that a knowledge of the divine is the supreme consummation of life. And yet, in spite of all this common spiritual heritage, the Stoics saw in the Christians only unreason, superstition, and fanaticism, and the Christians would accept not a jot less than the whole Christian creed. This is misunderstanding indeed, and such misunderstanding is tragedy.

CHAPTER XX

EPILOGUE

IT would not be right to take leave of Marcus Aurelius with an apology. No man in history is less in need of one. The apotheosis of his wife was a decent respect of Roman customs and modes of thought; and who can say how much he loved her, how much he relieved his grief by expressing that love in this conventional, religious way? If slander had already made itself audible, what more forceful denial? It was his wont to put the images of his dearest teachers, after death, among the *lares* and *penates* that guarded and watched over his home; why should he not follow the example of Antoninus Pius and enroll *Diva Faustina* among the deities of heaven that guarded and watched over the Roman Empire? And in the earthly apotheosis of his son, the elevation of Commodus to be the autocrat of the civilized world, he obeyed the dictates of nature, the petition of the Senate, probably the wishes of the people, and, as it seems, he took the only safe way to prevent civil war over the succession. Besides, what better method is there to judge an untried youth than by his education and his parentage? His education was such as, a generation before, had helped to make Marcus Aurelius what he was, and as for his breed, no young man in history, before or since, has had such a father and grandfather. The third ground of censure, that he enforced the law of the land against what he believed to be an obstinate, superstitious, degraded sect, is really of no greater validity than the other two. But under this third stricture tragedy lies, and of a deeper dye

because it is the first episode in the long and often bitter war between reason and faith, a war in which reason has not always been the oppressor. Christianity, with all its beauty, all its nobility, all its consolation and comforts, has been as stern, as resolute to suppress disobedience, as cruel, as ever was the Roman government. Reason has its sentinels as well as faith, and it almost seems as if these Roman servants of reason, by some sort of divination, foresaw that from Christianity—which to us, as we look back on a long line of saints and heroes, is rich with a beauty those Romans could not see and sweet with a fragrance they could not smell—would ripen, not the seeds that should declare the goodness and glory of the tree from which they sprung, but the seeds that should grow into fruits of evil—Albigensian persecutions, the Inquisition, the fires of Smithfield, the night of St. Bartholomew, autos-da-fé, wars of religion, infant damnation, and all the horrors of a hell hereafter. They that have seen some gray-haired man, whose youth was spent in peril and suffering for a high cause, whose manhood was innocent and upright, sitting alone in a darkened room, day after day, because he was persuaded that he had not been numbered among the elect, may well regret the pagan creeds. One must not forget that the Roman government was not fighting against the spirit of Jesus, for that it did not know, but in support of what it believed to be the principles of reason, as well as of morality.

I dwell on this aspect of the Roman attitude, (for it is not the place to repeat the universal admiration for the heroic Christian martyrs,) because it would be unjust not to lay emphasis upon the Roman purpose to benefit the world by building a solid Roman road of common sense, by refusing to accept the rainbow dreams which the oriental visionaries proclaimed. The Roman proconsul asked the Christian prisoners, eager for martyrdom, "Do you think you will ascend to heaven and receive some reward?" The educated

Roman officials planted their feet on this earth, and strove to make the world a more peaceful and orderly place. The Stoic philosophers did more; they wished to help their fellow men in things religious. They bade them accept life as our senses report it, and even so make it yield a religious meaning. Marcus Aurelius goes further still. Less emotional and more intellectual than Epictetus, he wrestles in his high Roman fashion, for a spiritual meaning in life; it is this wrestling that makes him one of the great religious figures in the world's history. For this reason it would not be right to take leave of him on the note of the vanity of life, although that is the predominate note in the *Meditations*. He says, often enough, that the life of man is but a moment of time, its substance flowing away, that his body is as a river and his soul as a dream or a mist (M. A. II, 17). I prefer to end with a reference to those passages in his book where one seems to hear in a low undertone, "Lord, I believe; help Thou my unbelief." For in his self-contained, self-dominating way he was a seeker after that vision which we, predicating a god, call revelation. The glorious conception of Christianity, that God is love, was not possible for him. To his way of thinking the divinest revelation of God lies in the Spirit of Reason, in the conceiving mind that, beholding the past and foreseeing the future, guides, directs, and coördinates all the multitude of diversities into one great unity. He never doubted the competence or the conclusions of the human mind, when it interprets what it perceives in terms of law, of order, of cause and effect, and so on. He accepted a cosmos as axiomatic, and a cosmos implies reason. He believed religiously in this divine universal reason, governor of the world, and that we best worship it by leading a life of reason. And within each of us, as he thought, human reason stands at the helm to steer our lives in accord with the course of eternal reason.

But can we be sure of the relation that exists between

the dim, imperfect reason in a man's breast and the eternal, omniscient, universal reason? Does the mind of man participate in the thoughts of God? The water in an estuary far inland rises and falls with the tide of the ocean because the waters of the ocean run into the estuary, but the water in a pool, though it has been brought by rain clouds from the ocean, moves only under the impulses of the capricious wind; and what and where is the channel that connects the divine reason with the human reason? Our senses observe the operations of nature, and our human reason makes its deductions as to the power that guides those operations; but how little the knowledge, and how great the ignorance. Is that power rational, and may there be some way of crossing the gulf between it and us? May there be some chink, some crevice, some skylight in the roof, by which light from the divine may enter into the soul of man? What are those feelings and intimations, arising we know not where, that now and again sweep over us like summer clouds? What are the convictions that, unsupported by our senses, fasten upon us? What are the dreams that prophesy truth? What are the visions that no one else sees, the voices that no one else hears? What are the categorical commands that issue from an authority, not of our making, and exact implicit obedience? May it be that these are ambassadors from the Great King? These are common human questionings, and in those days of religious ferment, when the mysteries of life occupied a larger space in the public curiosity than physical phenomena, they must have been more general than now. The Christians swept away all doubts, broke down what they averred were barriers and partition walls built by a sin-stained imagination, and set up the triumphant dogma of Christ, who, being both man and God, fills all the space that seems to intervene between the creature and his creator, envelops humanity in His own divine personality, and brings man's soul into the immediate presence of God. This faith

was foolishness to the Stoics. And, without faith, to what could they who followed reason attain?

By sundry pregnant phrases here and there, but more by the tone and pitch of his *Meditations*, we may conjecture that Marcus Aurelius mused over the possibilities of communion with God. And if in these musings he might seem to leave the Roman high road of common sense, we must remember that his purpose is not, like that of Christian mystics, to fling reason overboard, but to obtain reason more abundantly. His attitude was rational, and may, I think, be likened to that taken in our time by the Society for Psychical Research; and, indeed, in this respect, as in others, our generation goes back, passing over the intervening seventeen Christian centuries, to the reign of this Stoic Emperor. Marcus Aurelius would have accepted the definition of religion which Myers lays down in his book on *Human Personality*, that it is "the sane and normal response of the human spirit to all that we know of cosmic law; that is, to the known phenomena of the universe, regarded as an intelligible whole." And he certainly stands within the class of seekers of whom Myers speaks, "Men in whom the great pageant has inspired at least some vague out-reaching toward the Source of All; men for whom knowledge has ripened into meditation, and has prompted high desire." And the Emperor would have added a profound amen to the emotional hope that, "The World-Soul's infinite energy of omniscient benevolence should become in us an enthusiasm of adoring co-operation,—an eager obedience to whatsoever with our best pains we can discern as the justly ruling principle—τὸ ἡγεμονικόν—without us and within."

The pregnant phrases of the Emperor, to which I referred, touch upon an ancient theory of spiritual communication between man and deity. That theory was as old as Hesiod, and older. The common people believed in a class of incorporeal spirits, known to poetry and popular my-

thology as *daemons*, intermediaries between gods and men, servants of the divine will. The Stoics made no bones about adopting this popular name, using it as a metaphor or allegory, to indicate various manifestations of the energies of nature. This they always did with religious terms that passed current among the unphilosophical many. Marcus himself speaks of the denizens of the air and ether (M. A. XII, 24); but in his mouth this poetical phrase means no more than a symbol, as, for instance, to express phenomena of light or sound, and we have no ground to assume that he attached any psychical attribute to those forces, other than in so far as the eternal reason manifests itself in all things everywhere. But there is another passage in his *Meditations*, relating to this general subject of divine communion with man, which is charged with greater significance: "Suppose men ask," he says, " 'Where have you seen the gods or what proof have you that they exist, that you reverence them as you do?' My answer is, 'First they are visible to the sight; next, that I have not seen my own soul, but nevertheless I honor it.' So then from my continual experience of their power, I am convinced that the gods exist and I worship them" (M. A. XII, 28). His sentences often lend themselves to different interpretations; and the commentators, from Gataker (1652) to C. R. Haines, applying an elementary notion of the Stoics that the heavenly bodies are divine, interpret the phrase *they are visible to the sight* as a reference to the sun and stars. To me this interpretation seems narrow and unnecessarily literal. If the imaginary questioners believe that the stars are gods, the question is only worthy of Simple Simon, and Marcus must have been very drowsy to have noted down both question and answer; if they do not believe that the stars are gods, the answer is very flat. I think it tolerably clear that his statement means that he finds proof that the gods exist, first through his senses, that is, they manifest themselves in the visible uni-

verse, and next that, by some uncomprehended psychical process, they also manifest themselves to his heart, conscience, and mind. With this clue in our minds, let us look further into the current notion of daemons.

Diogenes Laertius, who takes Stoic philosophy *au pied de la lettre,* reports, "The Stoics say that there are daemons who look after the affairs of men and have sympathy with them." This is really the popular notion. The daemon of Socrates offers a more philosophic conception. The mystical intimations which came to Socrates now and again, from his youth up, to deter him from doing what he should not do, seemed, to him at least, to possess a unity, an individuality, a sort of personal identity that marked them as something more than the whisperings of conscience. He was aware of a prophetic voice, of a divine sign, and devoutly believed that in this manner he was vouchsafed a revelation of God's will. This mystical conscience knew right and wrong, not as a matter of human experience, but of divine enlightenment; it was a spiritual intermediary between God and him. This conception of a superhuman spiritual being or influence, a conception more or less embellished by Plato's fantastic imaginings, remained an accepted opinion among men who cared about such things down to the triumph of Christianity. Plutarch has recorded it in various passages. Daemons are the guardians of humanity, servants or ambassadors from the ethereal gods, who dwell apart in their celestial purity and disdain immediate contact with the perturbed and unclean lives of men. The functions of the daemons are clear enough; the chief perplexity lies in the nature of these intermediate spirits, or possibly merely in their origin and tendency. Are they elements of the human soul that fly up in search of deity, or are they emanations from the spiritual region that descend to help and comfort men? It is sometimes said that the nobler part of the soul is a daemon, the part which is not trammelled by the body but in "clear

dream and solemn vision" perceives what the grosser senses cannot perceive, and frequents at least the outer courts of abstract Wisdom and pure Beauty. Others say that the soul which has gone through comradeship with the body unstained and triumphant, becomes a daemon. Apuleius and Maximus of Tyre, both contemporaries of Marcus Aurelius, seem to hold some such opinions. At any rate they agree that daemons are a sort of guardian spirits, or angels, (to use a more familiar word of kindred meaning,) intermediate between the divine and the human. For Apuleius the daemon is conscience and more than conscience, for it is separate and distinct from man, a guardian angel, who keeps a most scrupulous watch over all that a man does, says, or thinks. He says: "We must mark it punctiliously, study it carefully, worship it religiously, as Socrates worshipped it in innocence and justice. Amid the perplexities of circumstance it will foresee, in hours of irresolution it will counsel, in danger it will protect, in poverty it will give riches. It is able, by *dreams,* by *signs,* or perhaps *even by its presence,* if the exigency demands, to ward off evil, to summon prosperity, to lift us up if we fall, to strengthen us if we totter, to light us in darkness, to dominate good fortune and to check adversity." And in this passage, Apuleius, I take it, is thinking of spiritual, not material, things; since he goes on to say, "*Animus colendus est* (a man must have a devout care of his own soul), *nihil enim est deo similius et gratius quam vir animo perfecto bonus* (for there is nothing more like unto God, nor more pleasing in His sight, than a man of an upright soul)." The daemon he describes is, I think, a manifestation of divine providence; the riches it bestows are riches of the soul, the evil it averts is sin. If we set aside the word daemon or angel, as bringing to the mind a too definite, almost a physical, object, and substitute some abstract word, such as Christians use to express the same fundamental idea, for instance the word *grace,* we shall come,

I think, closer to the idea that educated men of religious mind entertained of the daemon. Apuleius says, *"Daemonis cultus nihil aliud quam philosophiae sacramentum est"*; by which he means that the very first duty of philosophy, like a soldier's duty of allegiance, is the reverent attendance upon this means of communion between man and God. Like the Christian doctrine of grace, however, the conception of the word daemon varies with the education and intelligence of the persons who hold it.

Marcus himself is not clear, or at least not stable, in his opinion; at one time he speaks as if the daemon were the ruling reason itself (M. A. III, 6), at another as if it were merely his conscience (M. A. VIII, 45) or, again, some spiritual essence (M. A. III, 12). And in another passage, he says: "There is that enthroned within a man which keeps him unstained by pleasure, invulnerable to pain, untainted by insolence, insensible to the ills of life, a wrestler in the greatest of all contests, (that of wrestling with passion,) . . . which makes him welcome with his whole soul whatever lot is assigned to him, and seldom, and then only for the sake of the common welfare, concern himself with what other men say or do or think; but the man who would profit by the guidance of this mysterious power so enthroned must be wholly free from guile, and then he may be called a priest and servant of the gods" (M. A. III, 4). This is surely something more than conscience, more like what in Christian phraseology we should call the grace of God.

Seneca, who is the most Christian of the Stoics, says, in a letter to his friend Lucilius: "We do not need to lift up our hands towards heaven, or to beg the keeper of a temple to let us approach his idol's ear, as if in this way our prayers were more likely to be heard. God is near you, he is with you, he is within you. . . . A holy spirit indwells within us, one who marks our good and bad deeds, and is our guardian. As we treat this spirit, so are we treated by it. . . . If you

see a man who is unterrified in the midst of dangers, untouched by desires, happy in adversity, peaceful amid the storm, who looks down upon men from a higher plane, and views the gods on a footing of equality, will not a feeling of reverence for him steal over you? Will you not say: 'This quality is too great and too lofty to be regarded as resembling this petty body in which it dwells? *A divine power has descended upon that man.*' When a soul rises superior to other souls, when it is under control, when it passes through every experience as if that were of small account, when it smiles at our fears and at our prayers, *it is stirred by a force from heaven.* A thing like this cannot stand upright unless it be propped by the divine."

And Marcus, in what seems to me his most significant reference to the subject, says that nothing is more wretched than the man who goes round and round investigating the physical nature of things and the speculations of men, and does not perceive that "it is enough to abide close to the *daemon* within him and to serve it truly" (M. A. II, 13). Such a passage is a link that indicates a whole chain of reasoning. From it, as well as from his belief in dreams and oracles (M. A. IX, 27) and from his other references to the *genius within,* taken in connection with the current beliefs as to the Socratic daemon, and with the popular doctrine of a guardian spirit that accompanies a man through life, we may not unreasonably draw the inference that Marcus Aurelius thought, or at least hoped, that apart from the knowledge got by investigating the physical universe, apart from that got by a study of psychical phenomena and the speculations of philosophers, there is a direct means of attaining spiritual truth, that there is a spiritual intermediary between the human reason and the divine, that there is a bridge across the gulf, that the very water of the ocean floods and ebbs in the furthest estuary, and, moreover, that this means of communication, this source of revelation, this coming of the

heavenly ambassador, depends on the purity of the human soul. But, nevertheless, the divine, with which he hopes he may thus enter into communion, remains impersonal.

To some such proportions, petty indeed when compared with Christian hopes, was limited, I think, Marcus's hope of what we should call communion with God. A main difficulty in his way was this. Every such effort on man's part implies some centre in God's essence, some core from which his effluence emanates, some heart within the universal body, some attribute of personality; but the Stoics found the divine reason everywhere, divinely pervading all that is, with no more local or definite habitation in one place than another, and to cry out for a divine hand, a word, a touch, is so far forth a denial of this fundamental dogma. In pantheism the divine has no heart, or hand, or voice; it is never far, and it is never near. To my thinking, the Emperor's mastery of self never appears more calm, more Roman, more nobly serene, than in his allowing to this hope of divine communion no more than the pitiful measure of indulgence which his reason sanctioned. His reason said that the universe is impersonal, and he turned from the human desire, the human craving, for a Divine Friend, with a renunciation as ready as the welcome with which other men greet the great hopes of life.

Although Marcus Aurelius has in other respects so much in common with Christians that John Stuart Mill likens the *Meditations* to the teachings of Jesus, yet here he flatly parts company with them; and it is on this note of solemn resignation, of heroic acceptance of the things that are, of refusal to purchase hope at the cost of reason, that I take leave of him. He was the noblest of Romans, and take him all in all, there has not been his like since. Between the Rome of his day and our modern world there rolls an ocean of tempest-tossed centuries; and he and we are far apart. It is true that in many respects our modern world is more

like that ancient world than like any of the periods between, and yet great human movements, chief among them Christian theology, have so affected our moral atmosphere that at best we must be doubtful of our capacity to judge men of old with due moral appreciation. Nevertheless, his figure seems to stand clearly before us. He was a man of tender and heroic heart, with what one might call a romantic sentiment for self-sacrifice. There never was a great ruler, not even Abraham Lincoln, with less love of self. His devotion to duty was so habitual and complete, so much a matter of course, that there is danger lest we be led into thinking him devoid of appetite for the pleasant things of life. For that reason I come back to the glimpses we get of him in ordinary human moods, a creature sensitive to pleasure and pain, as, for instance, when a little boy he played the Cynic philosopher, when as a youth he revelled in the flattery he got from Fronto, or enjoyed a frolic with the shepherds or the vintagers, and, in later years, when he wrote down his admiration for Antoninus Pius and Claudius Maximus, and, perhaps most touching of all, when on the northern battle front he carried his handsome baby boy, young Commodus, in his arms and showed him to the soldiers. His *Meditations* reveal his constant endeavor to keep himself unspotted by sin; and so religious are they in their holy purity, so akin in temper, if not in doctrine, to the thoughts of Thomas à Kempis, that one must keep firm hold of the fact that this was no anchorite, no monk, who had turned his back upon the world, but a valiant Roman, soldier and statesman, whose energy, wisdom, courage, and perseverance propped up a tottering world.

APPENDIX A

LOGIC AND PHYSICS

ZENO, Cleanthes and Chrysippus, and their successors, were almost all men of foreign birth, who had been drawn to Athens as the home of philosophy. Many of them were of Semitic race. Probably all, whether by temperament, early history, or by racial tradition, were primarily interested in matters of right and wrong. But whatever their origin, the leaders of the School were constrained by the intellectual appetite of the Athenians to treat ethics, not as the whole of philosophy, as their natural inclination would have prompted, but merely as a part, and to complete the system by supplying other parts. This they did, with as good a grace as they could assume; they laid aside, as it were, the prophet's raiment of camel's hair for the frayed cloak of the philosopher, supplemented their ethical dogmas with theories upon psychology and physics, and presented the whole to their disciples as a complete philosophy.

Stoic philosophy is subtle but not closely jointed; throughout there are clumsy hypotheses as well as gaps and inconsistencies. The whole system, apart from ethics, bears marks of perfunctory labor, as if the Stoic teachers (although ready to acknowledge that, in order to understand a part, a man must comprehend the whole to which that part belongs) had been reluctant to turn from conduct and duty to a study of the processes of the mind and the nature of matter. Thanks in the main to Chrysippus, however, the work was done. Knowledge was divided into three main heads, logic, physics, and ethics. Of these, in the order of rational exposition, logic comes first. As Epictetus says, "In measuring grain the first thing is to examine the measure." (Discourses, I, 17.) The logic of the Stoics, however, is a little vague in its boundaries; it includes a study of the nature of knowledge, dialectics, and rhetoric. As I wish to confine myself to what may serve for a better understanding of the *Meditations*, I shall say nothing of dialectics or rhetoric, for Marcus Aurelius hardly mentions dialectics except to record his ignorance of it (M. A. VII, 67), and as to rhetoric, his relation to that subject, so fashionable in the

Roman world, appeared in another chapter. The Stoics' theory of knowledge, however, is of importance, for it is intimately connected with their theory of ethics. Epictetus, in a discourse on the nature of philosophy, says, "We perceive that men disagree, we ask ourselves why, and discover that this disagreement is due to different conceptions of what *seems;* therefore, we proceed to an investigation of that which *seems,* in order to determine whether or no it *rightly seems.*" (Discourses, II, 11.) The main purpose of this theory of knowledge, then, is to determine what *rightly seems;* that is, does that which *seems to be* reveal that which really is, or, as we should say, how far may we trust our senses, for the Stoics entertained no doubt as to the existence of a real world and of human ability to know it. The problem is to see the world as it is, and not be misled by false notions of reality. Knowledge is caused by contact of the mind with the external world, and is due to coöperation between the two. By this contact an image is produced upon the mind which the Greeks call *φαντασία*. Cleanthes compared this mental image to an impression made upon wax by a seal. Psychologically, the simile is faulty, for it conveys the idea that the mind is passive; but, ethically, it is justified, because it implies the permanent character of such an impression, and emphasizes the importance of making sure that the image, before it shall be firmly impressed, tallies accurately with reality. Simple images cast upon the mind of a sane and healthy person are likely to be correct. Vivid sights, sounds, and smells may be trusted; their vividness is their warrant. But the difficulty lies here; images are rarely simple; they are almost always complex; they involve a proposition; they predicate something or other concerning the object. For instance: I see a dog, but the image is not naked of all qualifications. On the contrary, the image is the nature of a proposition, "This is my dog," or "This is a strange dog," or again, "This is a gentle dog," or "This is a ferocious dog." When an image presents itself, there is a period of hesitation, however brief, during which man's dominant faculty, his reason, must determine, as best it can, whether or no the image is true or false; for if I go up to a ferocious dog and pat him thinking him a gentle dog, I may suffer for my incorrect impression. If, however, the reason acts warily, satisfies its doubts, and reports that the image is a true transcript of reality, then two acts of the mind follow (but so closely one upon the other as virtually to be one) which the Greeks called *συγκατάθεσις* and *κατάληψις*, that is assent and comprehension. These acts constitute the acceptance of the mental

impression, the φαντασία, as a true image of an outward object, one upon which we may safely rely. This mental image is then added to the other materials which the mind possesses, and incorporated into the fabric which we treat and deal with as knowledge. In addition to the warrant of vividness, the reason is enabled to judge of this correctness of the images that present themselves, by virtue of certain innate ideas of which I shall speak again. If our mental images are all correct, then our knowledge of the outer world will be correct, our judgments will be just, and our actions prudent; but if our mental images are false, we shall make all sorts of mistakes and blunders.

This exposition sounds very simple, but, as I have intimated, when the Stoic philosophers talk of psychology they are thinking of ethics, and this doctrine of scrutinizing, and then accepting or rejecting, a mental image, involves their whole theory of good and evil. It is easy to tell if a dog is one's own or not, or if he be gentle or ferocious, but it is often very hard to perceive that good is good and evil is evil; because what makes immediate things good and evil are their ultimate consequences, and the ultimate consequences are in most cases remote, and, frequently, quite or almost out of sight, while the unpleasantness that accompanies good, or the pleasure that comes hand in hand with evil, is incontinently obvious. It is against the seeming harshness of good, or the seeming sweetness of evil, that the reason must protect us. The business of the mind is to hold acceptance in suspense until we can see the beauty of goodness and the foulness of evil. Epictetus bids his disciples say to these φαντασίαι, "Appearances, wait for me a little; let me see who you are, and what you are about." (Discourses, II, 18.) To know things as they are, that is the proof of wisdom. *Cui sapiunt omnia, prout sunt, non ut dicuntur, aut aestimantur, hic vere sapiens est.* (Thomas à Kempis, Lib. II, Chap. I, 7.)

This juncture, in the process that puts the mind in contact with outward things, affords to the reason its opportunity to control knowledge and shape character; and it is in this particular, and in this particular only, I think, that Marcus Aurelius concerns himself with the theory of knowledge. "As to every impression let me keep my faculty of comprehension safe" (M. A. IV, 22). "It is a man's business to scrutinize plausible impressions (πιθανὰς φαντασίας)" (M. A. VIII, 26). "It is always in my power to take the greatest pains with the mental impression (φαντασία) that presents itself, so that nothing shall slip in without the approval of

reason" (M. A. VII, 54). "How easy a matter it is to push away . . . every impression (*φαντασία*) that is disturbing or alien, and straightway to be in perfect peace" (M. A. V, 2).

By this hypothesis of watch and ward at the mind's gate, the Stoics justify the maxim they took from Socrates, that virtue is knowledge. As this maxim does not altogether accord with commonplace views on knowledge, it may be worth while to see what they mean by it. Let us suppose that some rude fellow insults Zeno, calls him a liar, for instance. These words try to fetch along with them into Zeno's mind a rabble of connotations that shall stir his soul to indignation, resentment, anger, general perturbation, and confusion; but as they are about to slip in at the gate, his reason, acting as sentry, bids them halt, and examines them. The insulting words are not true, and will not harm Zeno. They will not be believed by Zeno's friends; they will recoil on the rude fellow that spoke them. And it may be that there was some excuse for the speaker, that sorrow, want, or illness, had put him beside himself, or he would not have spoken so; or, perhaps, some persons, honest but misinformed, had first told the slanderer what he thoughtlessly repeated, and so forth. After such an examination, the reason will not permit the false, unruly, connotations to cross the threshold. The bare words come in, but they are harmless, for foolish sounds of themselves have no power to disturb the inward peace of the mind. So, when the reason performs its office, there is within complete tranquillity, peace and good will. Knowledge of the truth is one with virtue.

This power of exclusion is of such potent efficacy that the reason sets itself up in almost absolute independence of the outer world, assumes control over the mind, and furnishes it with what thoughts it please. At least Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius go as far as this. Epictetus says: "Some things are in our power, some things are not. These are in our power, opinion, impulse, inclination, aversion, and in short all our actions. And the things not in our power are the body, property, reputation, office, and in short whatever are not our actions. . . . Be careful to say to every impression (*φαντασία*) 'You are fantastical, nothing but seeming,' then examine it and reflect upon it by the rules you have, and first of all by this rule, Does it pertain to the things in our power? And if it pertains to the things not in our power, be ready to say that it has no concern with you." (Encheiridion, I.) And Marcus Aurelius says: "Reverence thy power of accepting opinions: for it lies wholly with it that no opinion out of accord with Nature

and the constitution of a rational creature shall come nigh thy ruling reason. This enjoins due deliberation, and secures both fellowship with men and obedience to the gods" (M. A. III, 9). "Such as are the thoughts I harbor, such will my mind be, for the soul takes the dye of its thoughts. Dye it then with a constant course of thoughts like this, wherever it is possible to live, there it is possible also to live well" (M. A. V, 16). "Wipe away thy fantasies (*φαντασίαι*); keep saying to thyself, 'Now it is in my power that in this soul of mine there shall be no wickedness, no gross desire, no trace of confusion. I will see things as they really are, and deal with them as they deserve.' Remember that the self-government is in accordance with Nature (*κατὰ φύσιν*)" (M. A. VIII, 29). After this fashion, assuming an autocratic power over all immigrant ideas at the port of entry, the Stoics arrive at their haughty and triumphant attitude toward life, that all the phenomenal world which has moral significance is within the control of reason, and that man is indeed "the master of his fate, the captain of his soul." "It is not *things* that trouble men," Epictetus says, "but their *opinion* about things. For instance, death is not terrible or it would have appeared so to Socrates; but the opinion that death is terrible is what makes it terrible." (Encheiridion, V.) "For what purpose has nature given us reason? For the right use of appearances. Therefore it is the main work of a philosopher to examine appearances, and to distinguish between them, and to admit none without examination." (Discourses, I, 20.)

These images, then, according to the teaching of Stoic philosophy, once admitted and approved, become perceptions, and constitute the mental counterpart of the world of external reality. And the mind has other furniture as well. The reasoning powers work upon perceptions already received, combine them, apply the processes of induction and deduction, and create certain kinds of concepts, general ideas, abstract ideas, and such. And in addition to perceptions and concepts, there are in the human mind some sorts of innate ideas, especially, or solely perhaps, in matters of ethics. These, then, are the criteria by which to judge oncoming images. Epictetus says, "We come into the world with no natural notion of a right-angled triangle or of a half tone . . . but as to good and evil, the beautiful and the ugly, the becoming and the unbecoming, the proper and the improper, and what we ought to do and what we ought not to do, who has ever come into the world without an innate idea of them?" (Discourses, II, 11.) These innate ideas enable the ruling reason to determine under

what ethical category to classify the thoughts, impressions, fancies, that come thronging to the mind; and as to matters where innate ideas provide no criteria, matters that have no relation to ethics, the warrant for believing that perceptions are correct images of objects outside the mind lies in their vividness, their continuance, their consistency with one another. The Stoics also rely upon common sense and on the universal agreement of mankind.

The next subject is physics. This branch of knowledge, according to the Stoics, included not merely a study of the material world, but metaphysics, theology, and physiology as well, and indeed all knowledge apart from the subjects dealt with by logic and ethics. Marcus seldom refers to physics directly, but his *Meditations* presuppose a knowledge of the Stoic theories, and as a youth he must have studied the subject. He refers to himself as φυσιολογητός, a student of the processes of nature. The Stoic doctrine of physics derived some of its theories from Heraclitus, and, by negative as well as by positive reasoning, so shaped itself as to effect a sharp contrast with the atomic hypothesis, propounded by Democritus and accepted by Epicurus. According to the Epicurean hypothesis of the universe, there exists a vast void, and in it are eternal atoms endowed with the property of motion, which by their combinations and interactions create the world and all things in it. The Stoics, as well as the Epicureans, are materialists, but of quite a different sort; they postulate as a fundamental dogma that all things are of one substance, earth, air, water, men, beasts, plants, the gods, the soul, the emotions, all things, however unlike in form, quality, action, and character, and that this substance is material. Matter may become tenuous to a fineness beyond the reach of the senses, and hardly to be divined by the imagination, but still it is matter, though of a different category from the matter that we contrast with mind.

This universal matter is far from being inert; quite the contrary, it is instinct with motion. A mighty process, almost infinitely slow, is going on, of condensation and rarefaction, of systole and diastole. The universal substance, which in its primal state is an ethereal fire, contracts and expands. First contraction takes place, but in varying stages and degrees; some parts thicken into air, some condense into water, and others solidify into earth. After the maximum of solidity has been attained, a reverse process sets in, and continues until the whole passes back, through stages of rarefaction, into fiery ether, and all creation dissolves in primal fire. In the words of the Bible, "The heavens shall pass away with

a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (II Peter iii, 10). Within the cycles of this great process, whose revolutions shall continue everlastingly, the same universal energy displays itself in other forms. At one time it appears to act like a mighty current of wind, sweeping to and fro through space, and in this form it is known as spirit, or breath, πνεῦμα, or again, it acts as a sort of nervous or tonic energy; and, under one or other of these manifestations, this shaping power gives to each several thing, living or inanimate, its peculiar form and quality.

The language used by Stoic philosophers concerning the universe often appears to present it under a twofold aspect, one passive and the other active, and sometimes goes so far as to convey the impression that an outside force acts upon matter; but this comes from carelessness of utterance. If questioned, they would unhesitatingly assert that the primal substance is instinct with energy, that motion is an inherent attribute of matter, and that all is one.

This universal energy is not mechanical, merely; it is not only that, but in addition it is the principle of life and likewise a spiritual force. It presents itself under various aspects. If we fix our attention on the orderly course of nature, on the steady sequence of phenomena, and especially upon the inexorable constraint in the lives of men, this cosmic energy assumes the aspect that we call Fate, εἱμαρμένη. But if we shift our attention to the relation of cause and effect, and ponder upon the cause of causes, the power becomes αἰτία, which corresponds after a fashion to the modern term *First Cause*. Or, again, if we look at the universe from a biological point of view and concern ourselves mainly with the processes of life in animate creation, then, under that aspect, this power finds a more appropriate name as *Nature*, the principle of growth and organic changes, for which the Greek word is φύσις. And, finally, if we reflect on the marvellous adaptation of part to part, how all things subserve other interests, how plan and purpose seem to run through the whole system, more especially if we feel gratitude and are able to pronounce the universe good, in that case the power assumes a sort of personality and becomes πρόνοια, Providence.

So the hypothesis of the Stoics, making great account of mind in man, of instinct in beasts, of growth in plants, and of the order which, however confused it may look to human eyes, prevails in every part of the universe, (wherein all things work to-

gether, as they thought, to one common end,) asserts that a whole, which consists of such parts, must be as much alive and rational as any of its parts. The Stoic universe, therefore, is animate and rational. This dogma is the corner stone of Stoic philosophy.

The principle of life, the divine reason, in the universe, is called the *logos* (λόγος), which Greek term has been authoritatively translated in English as the *Word,* for in man, the only rational animal, reason and speech are closely bound together. This conception of a universal, divine reason, derived from the speculations of Heraclitus, is familiar to us in the opening chapter of St. John's gospel, whatever the immediate source from which the author of that gospel may have obtained it: "In the beginning was the Word (λόγος), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." But in St. John the term has received a more profound religious meaning than even the most devout Stoics gave it; nevertheless, for the Stoics, also, the *Logos* is divine.

The next step is to explain the method by which, under the direction of reason, the primal substance is differentiated into the vast diversity of things that are revealed to our senses. How, in particular, (since we are more concerned with organic than inorganic things,) do living creatures, whether in genera and species, or as individuals, come forth from the homogeneity of substance? The Stoics answer in this way: The ruling reason, the *logos,* is quick with potential life, and under that aspect is called λόγος σπερματικός, the germinative reason. (M. A. IV, 14, 21; VI, 24.) As such, it scatters broadcast seeds of almost infinite diversity, each a small particle of itself, and endowed, not only with individuality, but also with powers of growth and of multiplying, according to the peculiar nature of the seed. The differences among the seeds seem to be caused by differences of energy. In this way, as in the Book of Genesis, herb yielding seed, the fruit tree yielding fruit whose seed is in itself, the fowl that fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven, cattle, creeping things, the beasts of earth, man and every living creature that moveth, all and each bring forth after their kind. What the original motive or impulse may be that induced or compelled the homogeneous fiery ether to turn toward division, separation, and individuality, was a mystery for the Stoics, as it is for us. Marcus Aurelius speaks of a primal impulse by which Providence stirred Nature to create an ordered universe (M. A. IX, 1), but goes no further.

In Stoic philosophy, as in every other, mystery rests over creation. The philosopher accepts the world as he finds it, and confines

his explanation to a description of the processes of change. According to the Stoics, the multitudinous things in the universe were produced by self-directing impulses of the universal reason, and ranged themselves in degrees, each higher class possessing the properties of the lower, as well as nobler attributes of its own. All things possess form, a power of cohesion in individual shape, which the Greeks call ἕξις. The organic world, both animal and vegetable, has the powers of growth and reproduction, φύσις, a word, as I have said, that we translate *nature*. In animals, again, is a higher life, a psychical part, a sort of spirit or shadowy soul, ψυχή (psyche), which, by means of the senses and instincts, looks after the corporeal welfare of the animal. This psychical element, is, like all else, a part of the universal substance, of primal, ethereal fire, but it is distinguished by its high degree of tenuousness and tension, and, in default of any better explanation of its origin, was conjectured to be an exhalation from the blood. (M. A. V, 33; VI, 15.) Man alone has the attribute of mind, νοῦς, the ruling reason, λόγος ἡγεμονικός, or, as it is often called for short, τὸ ἡγεμονικόν. This *logos* is the rational lord and master of man; it is of one nature with the divine reason. And in like manner as the divine reason governs the universe, so should man's reason govern him. The Stoics did not accept Plato's belief in the immortality of the soul. For them, at least for Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, when death comes, the reason resolves into its original element, even as the body crumbles into dust. "I have been created as a part [of a whole]. I shall vanish away into that which gave me birth; or rather there shall come a change and I shall be taken up into the germinative reason." (M. A. IV, 14.) Some philosophers entertained the hypothesis that the souls of good men will survive bodily death, and continue in their individuality until the final end of that one of the vast cycles of eternal time to which they have been allotted by destiny. But in the all-consuming conflagration even the souls of the righteous pass away.

Thus created and endowed, all these several things, of whatsoever kind they are, work together to carry out the divine purpose, or, if we so prefer to regard it, the predeterminate course of fate. Marcus Aurelius writes in his note-book: "We all work together toward one final end, some with knowledge thereof and conscious intelligence, and some in ignorance; as Heraclitus (I think it is) says, 'Even they that sleep are workers' and collaborators in all that takes place in the universe. One coöperates in this and another in that; and also, in full measure flowing over, both he

that grumbles and he that tries to resist and undo what is done. For the universe needs, also, just such a man." (M. A. VI, 42.) And, again, he says: "All things are intertwined in one another, by a sacred tie; hardly anything is alien to any other. All have been arrayed side by side, and together they set one universe in order. For there is one universe compounded of all things, and one God that permeates all things, and one substance and one law, and there is one reason common to all intellectual creatures, and there is one truth; and it may be there is one perfection for all living things that are akin and share in the same reason." (M. A. VII, 9.)

And since all the parts of this whole are collaborators for a common end, bound each to each in mutual dependence, it follows that all are affected by whatever befalls each, whether for good or ill. "All that is in harmony with thee, O Universe, is harmony for me. Nothing that is in Thy due time, comes too early or too late for me. All that Thy seasons bring forth, O Nature, is fruit for me." (M. A. IV, 23.) And again: "Give a welcome to all that happens, even if it seems too harsh, because it contributes to the health of the universe and to the welfare and prosperity of Zeus himself." (M. A. V, 8, §2.) This universal interdependence of the component parts of the universe the Stoics called *sympathy* (συμπάθεια), as if one vast nervous system rendered each part sensitive to what all the others felt. Such a creed, when illuminated by emotion, does not fall far below the Christian belief that God is all in all. By this creed every human life, in spite of our animal nature and our trivial interests, is graced with a species of divine dignity. Marcus Aurelius often comes back to that thought: "Always remember that the universe is one living thing, of one substance and one soul." (M. A. IV, 40.) "Whatever befalls, each individual contributes to the welfare, the perfection, yes, by Zeus, even to maintain the unity, of that which governs the universe." (M. A. V, 8.) It is this doctrine of cosmic sympathy, of universal brotherhood, that renders some knowledge of the universe, of its nature and workings, necessary to the man that desires to be good. "He who does not know what the universe is, does not know where he is. He who does not know to what end the universe is directed, does not know who he is, or what the universe is." (M. A. VIII, 52.) "What is my business? To be good. And how can that be properly accomplished except with a knowledge both of the nature of the universe and of the constitution of man?" (M. A. XI, 5.)

It might seem that ethics, if they depend upon these physical theories, are in a very precarious condition. But, indeed, it is not so. On the contrary, all the childish ignorance and error concerning the physical world may be put aside, and there will still be left the truth, which for the Stoics constituted the matter of essential importance, that life is the sum of multitudinous relations, and that the part is in absolute dependence upon the whole. On this truth rest the ethical dogmas of harmony between the creature and all creation, of submission of the human will to the divine will. The physical creed of universal homogeneity of substance is inextricably bound up with the communion between the human soul and deity, for there is "one substance, one law, and one God."

This, I think, is enough of the Stoics' physics and metaphysics to enable the reader to understand the allusions to those subjects in the *Meditations*.

APPENDIX B

SAYINGS OF EPICTETUS

I have usually cited the admirable translations by Mr. Hastings Crossley.

IF a man could be thoroughly penetrated, as he ought, with this thought, that we are all in an especial manner sprung from God, and that God is the Father of men as well as of Gods, full surely he would never conceive aught ignoble or base of himself. Whereas if Caesar were to adopt you, your haughty looks would be intolerable; will you not be elated at knowing that you are the son of God? (H..C.)

He that hath grasped the administration of the World, who hath learned that this Community, which consists of God and men, is the foremost and mightiest and most comprehensive of all:—that from God have descended the germs of life, not to my father only and father's father, but to all things that are born and grow upon the earth, and in an especial manner to those endowed with Reason (for those only are by their nature fitted to hold communion with God, being by means of Reason conjoined with Him) —why should not such an one call himself a citizen of the world? Why not a son of God? Why should he fear aught that comes to pass among men? Shall kinship with Caesar, or any other of the great at Rome, be enough to hedge men around with safety and consideration, without a thought of apprehension: while to have God for our Maker, and Father, and Kinsman, shall not this set us free from sorrows and fears? (H. C.)

Asked how a man might convince himself that every single act of his was under the eye of God, Epictetus answered:

'Do you not hold that all things are bound together in one?'

'I do.'

'Well, and do you not hold that things on earth and things in heaven are continuous and in unison with each other?'

'I do,' was the reply.

'Else how should the trees so regularly, as though by God's command, at His bidding flower; at His bidding send forth shoots, bear fruit and ripen it; at His bidding let it fall and shed their leaves, and folded up upon themselves lie in quietness and rest? How else, as the Moon waxes and wanes, as the Sun approaches and recedes, can it be that such vicissitude and alternation is seen in earthly things?

'If then all things that grow, nay our own bodies are thus bound up with the whole, is not this still truer of our souls? And if our souls are bound up in contact with God, as being very parts and fragments plucked from Himself, shall He not feel every movement of theirs as though it were His own, and belonging to His own nature?' (H. C.)

God (Zeus) hath placed by the side of each a man's own Guardian Spirit, who is charged to watch over him—a Guardian who sleeps not nor is deceived. For to what better or more watchful Guardian could He have committed each of us? So when you have shut the doors and made a darkness within, remember never to say you are alone; for you are not alone, but God is within, and your Guardian Spirit, and what light do they need to behold what you do? To this God you also should have sworn allegiance, even as soldiers unto Caesar. They when their service is hired, swear to hold the life of Caesar dearer than all else: and will you not swear your oath, that are deemed worthy of so many and great gifts? And will you not keep your oath when you have sworn it? And what oath will you swear? Never to disobey, never to arraign or murmur at aught that comes to you from His hand: never unwillingly to do or suffer aught that necessity lays upon us. 'Is this oath like theirs?' They swear to hold no other dearer than Caesar: you, to hold your true selves dearer than all else besides. (H. C.)

Friend, lay hold with a desperate grasp, ere it is too late, on Freedom, on Tranquillity, on Greatness of Soul! Lift up thy head, as one escaped from slavery; dare to look up to God, and say:—'Deal with me henceforth as Thou wilt! Thou and I are of one mind. I am Thine. I refuse nothing that seemeth good to Thee; lead on whither Thou wilt, clothe me in what garb Thou pleasest: wilt Thou have me a ruler or a subject—at home or in exile—poor or rich? All these things will I justify unto men for Thee. . . .

Who would Hercules have been had he loitered at home? no Hercules, but Eurystheus. And in his wanderings through the

world how many friends and comrades did he find? but nothing dearer to God. Wherefore he was believed to be God's (Zeus) son, as indeed he was. So then in obedience to Him, he went about delivering the earth from injustice and lawlessness.

But thou art not Hercules, thou sayest, and canst not deliver others from their iniquity—not even Theseus, to deliver the soil of Attica from its monsters? Purge away thine own, cast forth thence —from thine own mind, not robbers and monsters, but Fear, Desire, Envy, Malignity, Avarice, Effeminacy, Intemperance. And these may not be cast out, except by looking to God alone, by fixing thy affections on Him only, and by consecrating thyself to His commands. If thou choosest aught else, with sighs and groans thou wilt be forced to follow a Might greater than thine own, ever seeking Tranquillity without, and never able to attain unto her. For thou seekest here where she is not to be found; and where she is, there thou seekest her not! (H. C.)

'As God hath ordained, so do; else thou wilt suffer chastisement and loss.' Askest thou what loss? None other than this: To have left undone what thou shouldst have done: to have lost the faithfulness, the reverence, the modesty that is in thee! Greater loss than this seek not to find! (H. C.)

In the room of all other pleasures put this—the pleasure which springs from conscious obedience to God. (H. C.)

It is the critical moment that shows the man. So when the crisis is upon you, remember that God, like a trainer of wrestlers, has matched you with a rough and stalwart antagonist.—'To what end?' you ask. That you may prove the victor at the Great Games. Yet without toil and sweat this may not be! (H. C.)

Be not anxious that what happens shall happen as you wish, but wish for that to happen which does happen. Then your life will flow on in tranquillity.

Remember that you act a part in such a play as the manager chooses. He may assign a short part, or he may assign a long part. If he wishes you to play the part of a poor man, play that part with good grace, so, too, whether it be that of a lame man, a person in authority, or a private person. For it is your business to play well the rôle that is given you, but to select the rôle is Another's business.

Keep death and exile, and all other things that seem to be terrible, before your eyes every day, and most of all death, and you will never think a low thought, nor will you covet anything.

Everything has two hafts, one to take hold of, the other not to take hold of. If your brother sins, do not lay hold of his sin, for that is the haft not to be taken hold of, but rather lay hold of this haft, that he is your brother, brought up together with you. And you will have hold of the handle that is meant to carry it.

Never say of anything I have lost it, but say, I have given it back. Is your child dead? It has been given back. Has your estate been wrested from you? This too has been taken back. But he that robbed me is a wicked man! What is it to you by whose hand He that gave has taken away? So long as what He gives shall remain to you, take care of it as the property of another; do as travellers do at an inn.

What wouldst thou be found doing when overtaken by Death? If I might choose, I would be found doing some deed of true humanity, of wide import, beneficent and noble. But if I may not be found engaged in aught so lofty, let me hope at least for this—what none may hinder, what is surely in my power—that I may be found raising up in myself that which had fallen; learning to deal more wisely with the things of sense; working out my own tranquillity, and thus rendering that which is its due to every relation of life. (H. C.)

Should there not be someone to . . . sing the hymn of God on behalf of all men? What else can I that am old and lame do but sing to God? Were I a nightingale, I should do after the manner of a nightingale. Were I a swan, I should do after the manner of a swan. But now, since I am a reasonable being, I must sing to God; that is my work: I do it, nor will I desert this my post, as long as it is granted me to hold it; and upon you too I call to join in this selfsame hymn. (H. C.)

APPENDIX C

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(1701), George Long (1862), G. H. Rendall (1898), John Jackson (1906), and others. The most satisfactory is that in the Loeb Classical Library by C. R. Haines. It is excellent and gives the Greek text. In an appendix to his book Mr. Haines has included Marcus's speeches and sayings. The early translation by Meric Casaubon (1634) has been republished in *Everyman's Library*.

M. Cornelii Frontonis et M. Aurelii Imperatoris Epistulae.

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Hermas lived in Rome, and probably wrote in the reign of Antoninus Pius.
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This book was probably written about 177 A. D.
Apology on behalf of the Christians. (Greek.) Aristides of Athens. This author wrote in the time of Antoninus Pius.
Works: Apology, Ad Nationes, etc. (Latin.) Tertullian.
These treatises were written shortly before the year 200 A. D.
Against Celsus. (Greek.) Origen.
Origen's dates are about 185-254 A. D.
Ecclesiastical History. (Greek.) Eusebius.
Eusebius wrote in the reign of Constantine.

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APPENDIX D

AUTHORITIES FOR SPECIFIC STATEMENTS IN THE TEXT, TRANSLATION OF PASSAGES IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE, ETC.

Introduction

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"Das Schaudern," etc.: "The sentiment of awe is the best thing in man." *Faust,* Part II, Act I, Scene—*Finstere Galerie*	11	1
"Le Livre de Marc-Aurèle," etc. *Marc-Aurèle,* E. Renan, Chap. XVI, pp. 262, 272: "The book of Marcus Aurelius will keep its freshness forever, since it does not rest on dogma. Everybody from the atheist, or him that thinks himself one, to the man most deeply set in the creed of a particular sect, can find in it fruits of edification. It is the most wholly human book there is . . . this incomparable book, this manual of a life of resignation, this gospel of those who do not believe in the supernatural. . . . Though science should do away with God and the soul, the book of *Meditations* would remain young in its life and its truth. Marcus Aurelius's religion . . . is that absolute religion that comes into being when a high ethical conscience confronts the universe. It belongs neither to one race nor one country. No revolution, no progress, no discovery will have power to change it."	14	32
Frederick the Great's "Marc-Aurèle peut-être," etc: "Of all men, perhaps Marcus Aurelius has carried virtue to its highest point." *Politische Correspondenz,* Vol. 37, *À l'Électrice Douairière de Saxe,* Sept. 4, 1775. See also: H. de Catt, *Mes Entretiens avec Frédéric le Grand,* pp. 33, 270, 338	15	14

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Montesquieu, "Jamais philosophe," etc.: "No philosopher has ever made men appreciate the sweetness of virtue and the dignity of human life better than Marcus Aurelius. The heart is touched, the soul ennobled, the spirit uplifted." *Œuvres*, Tome 7, p. 160; see also: *Grandeur et Décadence des Romains*, Chap. XVI 15 18

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Socrates brought philosophy, etc.: Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.* V, 4 . . . . . 17 5

Zeno picked up Xenophon, etc.: Diog. Laer., Book VII, *Zeno*, III 17 15

Semitic type, etc.: Diog. Laer., Book VII, *Zeno*, II, XVIII, XXIII, XII 17 22

Cynic's *Kosmopolitismus:* Zeller, III, Part I, p. 277 . 18 30

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Cf. Aristotle, *Nich. Ethics*, IX, 9		
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Doctrine of *κατὰ φύσιν*: Diog. Laer., Book VII, *Zeno*, LIII	23	15
St. Paul quoted: Acts xvii, 24-28	23	24
Cleanthes: *Hymn to Zeus*. Arnim, §537	24	26
See also: Arnold, §419		
Cleanthes: "Lead me, O Zeus," etc. Arnim, §527	26	7
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"La vie n'est ni un plaisir," etc.: "Life is neither a pleasure nor a pain, it is a serious matter, with which we are entrusted, and we must lead it and end it honorably"	34	21

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Emperor Hadrian, quick to reward merit: Phil., *Lives of the Sophists*, Kayser, II, 42, 10	38	6
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Marcus leaves his old home with regret: S. H. A. IV, Chap. 5, 4	43	24
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Antoninus at Lorium, Lanuvium: S. H. A. III, Chap. 1, 8	44	3
Antoninus fond of fishing, etc.: S. H. A. III, Chap. 11, 2	44	8
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Lake of Nemi, legend: Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, Vol. I, Chap. 1	44	26
Marcus's love of games: S. H. A. IV, Chap. 4, 9	45	19
Marcus's love of boar-hunting: Dio Cass. LXXII, 36, and cf. Haines (M. A.) p. 46, Note 1	45	22
Marcus's friendships: S. H. A. IV, Chap. 3, 8	45	30
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French sentences: "I ask you, I beseech you, I implore you"; and, "Stirring periods to end my speech."	66	11
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French phrase: "A very improbable subject."	67	4
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French words: "One object only."	68	20
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French phrase: "Be hopeful, have good courage, trust time and practice."	69	24
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Antoninus to Fronto: Haines, p. 127; Naber, p. 163 . .	76	19
The reference to Faustina at the end of this letter, Mommsen says, is to Faustina, the younger, but as she was probably about twelve years old, I think Fronto refers to the late Empress.		

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Fronto to Marcus: Haines, p. 53; Naber, III, 10 . . .	87	17
Marcus as a letter-writer: Phil., *Letters*, Kayser, II, p. 258	88	31

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Thirteen children: *Archäol. Zeit.* 1878, 103; Mommsen, Vol. IV, 475, etc.	96	14
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The incomprehensible, mighty works
Are beautiful as on creation's day.

Wordsworth, quoted: *Ode to Duty* 116 17
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Biography of Alexander Severus: S. H. A. XVIII, Chap. 9, 1	147	23
Biography of Antoninus Diadumenus: S. H. A. XVI, Chap. 7, 4	147	29
Emperor Julian: *The Caesars;* cf. Zosimus, Lib. I, Chap. 7, who classes M. A. and Lucius together among the good Emperors, and says that they corrected much that was wrong; cf. also Dio Cass. LXXI, 2	147	33
Fronto on the Syrian army: *Principia Historiae,* Naber, p. 207	148	16
Marcus had selected Cassius: S. H. A. IV, Chap. 20, 2	149	13
Marcus to Prefect: S. H. A. VI, Chap. 5, 5	149	15
Prefect to Marcus: S. H. A. VI, Chap. 5, 9	150	1
Avidius Cassius: S. H. A. VI, Chap. 1, 4; Chap. 3, 8	150	11
Contradictions in his character: S. H. A. VI, Chap. 3, 4	150	16
His severity: S. H. A. VI, Chap. 4, 1	150	23
Success of Statius Priscus: S. H. A. VI, Chap. 9, 1; cf. Bury, p. 541	150	33
Success of Avidius Cassius: cf. Mommsen, IV, p. 484	151	3
Joint triumph of the Emperors, etc.: S. H. A. IV, Chap. 12, 7-9; cf. Watson, p. 174, Note 5	151	21

Chapter XII

Marcus to Fronto: Haines, p. 301; Naber, *Ad Ant. Imp.* II, 1, p. 104	152	13
French phrases: "I need rest," "these troubles that pursue me," "something with both harmony and good sense; that shows an ethical stamp."		

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Fronto to Marcus: Haines, p. 303; Naber, *Ad Ant. Imp.* II, 2, p. 105	153	16
Marcus to Fronto: Naber, *Ad Ant. Imp.* II, 4, p. 106	153	25
Fronto to Marcus: Naber, *Ad Ant. Imp.* II, 5, p. 107	154	9
Life at Alsium: *De Feriis Alsiensibus,* Naber, p. 224	155	6
Centumcellae: Pliny's *Letters,* VI, 31	155	6
Marcus to Fronto: Naber, I, p. 223	156	4
Fronto to Marcus: about Alsium, Naber, p. 225	156	14
Marcus to Fronto: Naber, *Ad Ant. Imp.* I, 1, p. 94	157	1
French phrase: "For he is full of sympathy for those who love you."	157	13
See Naber, *Ad Ant. Imp.* I, 5, p. 103	158	7
Fronto to Marcus: Naber, *Ad Ant. Imp.* I, 2, p. 94	158	17
French phrase: "The mother's heart trembled for joy."	159	21
Fronto to Marcus: Naber, *Ad Ant. Imp.* I, 3, p. 101	161	16
Marcus to Fronto: Naber, *Ad Ant. Imp.* I, 4, p. 101	162	5
Marcus merciful: Dio Cass. LXXII, 14	163	9
Cultivated, etc.: cf. his frequent reference to Plato's saying, "If philosophers were kings," etc. S. H. A. IV, Chap. 27, 7	163	23
Sacrificial rites: S. H. A. IV, Chap. 13, 1	164	5
Spear from temple of Bellona: Dio Cass. LXXII, 33	164	10
Lucian: *Alexander, or the False Prophet,* Chap. 48	164	15
Ladies of the imperial palace and religious rites: cf. Cohen and Feuerdent, *Description historique des Monnaies frappées sous l'Empire Romain,* Vol. II, (Faustina the elder), Nos. 229, 304; Vol. III (Faustina the younger), Nos. 168–172, etc.	165	10
His religious tolerance: cf. his acceptance of Galen's trumped-up excuse for not accompanying Marcus on a campaign, that the family gods forbade, Galen's *Works,* XIX, Chap. 2. Also, cf. Gibbon, Vol. I, p. 76, Note; S. H. A. I, Chap. 22, 10 (Hadrian's precedent)	165	23
Marcus and superstition: It is sometimes said, that because he believed in dreams (M. A. I, 17, §8; IX, 27) he was superstitious. At that time everybody believed in the significance of dreams: Pausanias, X, 32, 9; Herodian, Book II, Chap. 9, 5-8; Dio Cass. LXXIII, 23; Galen, *On the Natural Faculties,* III, 10 (A. J. Brock); Scriptores Historiae Augustae,		

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passim, Aristides the Sophist, Plutarch, Pliny, Lucian; cf. Haines, *Marcus Aurelius,* p. 24, Note 1; and the Christians. Cf. *The New Testament.* Nowadays, since Freud has published his theories, dreams have again acquired an importance almost equal to what they held in the second century.	165	25

Chapter XIII

Plague: S. H. A. V, Chap. 8; Amm. Marcell., Book 23, Chap. 6, §24; Eutropius, Lib. VIII, Chap. 12, cf. *Vie d'Aelius Aristide,* p. 47	166	4
Cause of Roman decline: Niebuhr, *Lectures on History of Rome,* Vol. III, p. 251	166	19
Barbarian invasions: S. H. A. IV, Chap. 12, 13; Chap. 14; Lucian, *Alexander or the False Prophet,* Chap. 48; Amm. Marcell., Book XXIX, Chap. 6, 1 . . .	166	23
Marcus sets example of thrift: S. H. A. IV, Chap. 17, 4; Chap. 21, 9	167	26
Gladiators impressed: S. H. A. IV, Chap. 21, 6, 7 . .	168	4
Remark of the wits: S. H. A. IV, Chap. 23, 5-6 . . .	168	7
Northern border believed secure: S. H. A. IV, Chap. 14, 6	168	19
Lucius's death: S. H. A. IV, Chap. 14, 8; Eutropius, Lib. VIII, Chap. 10	168	23
Road to Carnuntum: *Itinerarium Antonini Augusti* (of uncertain date, but this road is correct)	170	23
Guerilla fighting: cf. pictures on Marcus's and Trajan's columns	171	23
Battle on the ice: Dio Cass. LXXII, 7	172	1
Advance of the Romans: cf. Bury, pp. 545-6	172	4
"Tu," etc.: "Roman, remember it is thy task to rule over subject peoples." *Aeneid* VI, 851	172	15
Marcus's purpose of conquest: Dio Cass. LXXII, 33; S. H. A. IV, Chap. 27, 10, cf. Mommsen, *The Provinces,* Vol. I, p. 235 (Eng. translation). See also Herodian, Book I, Chap. 11	172	16
Drugs: cf. Galen's prescription for theriac: 1 part seed clover, 1 part birthwort, 1 part wild rue, 1 part pounded pulse; to be taken in pills with wine. Galen's *Works,* XIV, Chap. XVII, p. 201; and see, *Les Médicins Grecs à Rome,* p. 274, Maurice Albert	172	32

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The Emperor's rebuke: Digest IV, 2, 13; cf. Dio Cass. LXXII, 3. When the soldiers demanded higher pay after a victory, he refused, saying, "Whatever excess you obtain beyond the regular stipend will be wrung from the blood of your parents and kinsfolk." 173 11

Trial of Herodes, etc.: Phil., *Lives of Sophists*, Kayser, Vol. II, p. 68. It was in the course of this trial that Marcus's little girl, aged three, clasped his knees and begged him to save the Athenians for her sake. 173 20

Offer of reward, etc.: Dio Cass. LXXII, 14 . . . . 173 30

Miraculous rain: cf. Mommsen, IV, p. 498 . . . . . 174 14

"It is said," etc.: Translation of J. H. Newman, "The Thundering Legion," in his *Essay on the Miracles* . 176 12

Miracle attributed to Marcus's prayers: S. H. A. IV, Chap. 24, 4. Cf. Claudian, *De VI Cons. Honorii*, ll. 340-350 . . . . . 177 4

Chapter XIV

Bury: *Student's Roman Empire*, p. 545 . . . . . 178 17

Cassius's proclamation: S. H. A. VI, Chap. 14, 7 . . . 178 25

Lucius to Marcus: S. H. A. VI, Chap. 1, 6 . . . . 179 27

This and the following letter are looked upon with much distrust, but it seems to me likely that they are true in substance if not in word.

Marcus to Lucius: S. H. A. VI, Chap. 2, 1 . . . . . 180 15

Faustina's alleged complicity: S. H. A. VI, Chap. 7, 1 . 181 11

Born in Cyrrhus: Dio Cass. LXXII, 22 . . . . . 181 16

Marcus's speech: Dio Cass. LXXII, 24 . . . . . 181 26

These speeches follow the precedents in Thucydides. The touch in them of baroque sentiment must be laid to the taste of the historian and not to Marcus.

Alarm in Rome: S. H. A. VI, Chap. 7, 7 . . . . . 183 30

Marcus to Faustina: S. H. A. VI, Chap. 9, 6 . . . . 184 1

As to this correspondence, see comment on letter, p. 179.

Faustina to Marcus: S. H. A. VI, Chap. 9, 11 . . . . 184 8

Faustina to Marcus: S. H. A. VI, Chap. 10, 1 . . . . 184 15

Marcus to Faustina: S. H. A. VI, Chap. 11, 3 . . . . 185 6

Marcus to Senate: S. H. A. VI, Chap. 12, 2 . . . . . 185 27

Confiscation: S. H. A. VI, Chap. 7, 6 . . . . . 186 21

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Clodius Albinus, etc.: S. H. A. XII, Chap. 6, 2; Chap. 10, 10	186	34
Cassius murdered: Dio Cass. LXXII, 27-28; S. H. A. IV, Chap. 25, 2	187	2
Emperor's wishes followed: S. H. A. IV, Chap. 25, 5-7	187	7
Marcus's answer, etc.: S. H. A. VI, Chap. 8, 2-6	187	10
Burned letters: Dio Cass. LXXII, 29; Amm. Marcell., Book XXI, Chap. 16, §11	187	20

Chapter XV

Welcome given Marcus: S. H. A. IV, Chap. 26, 2	188	5
Faustina's death: S. H. A. IV, Chap. 26, 4	188	16
Faustina and Marcus: cf. Cohen and Feuerdent, III, p. 135, etc., for coins; Nos. 108, 109, 146, 159, 173, 176, 179, 180, 181; also, picture of Marcus, Faustina and Roma, found in Villa Albani; also, S. H. A. IV, Chap. 26, 8; M. A. I, 17; Dio Cass. LXXII, 30	188	22
"With this hand," etc.: Themistius, *Oration XV*	189	16
Divine honors for Faustina: S. H. A. IV, Chap. 26, 4-6; Dio Cass. LXXII, 30, 31	189	19
Meeting with Hermogenes: Phil., *Lives of Sophists*, Kayser, II, 83, 3	190	18
Meeting with Aelius Aristides: Phil., *Lives of Sophists*, Kayser, II, 87, 20	190	35
Adrian: Phil., *Lives of Sophists*, Kayser, II, 93, 17; 92, 28	191	20
Salaries: Lucian, *Eunuch*, §3	192	16
Eleusinian mysteries, etc.: Dio Cass. LXXII, 31; S. H. A. IV, Chap. 27, 1. Cf. Foucart, *Les Mystères d'Éleusis*, p. 362; Plato, *Phaedo*, LXIX; Cicero, *De Legibus*, II, 14	192	21
Commodus made consul, etc.: S. H. A. IV, Chap. 16, 2; VII, 2, 4	194	1
Commodus receives tribunician power: S. H. A. IV, Chap. 27, 5; married, IV, 27, 8	194	2
Commodus Augustus: Cohen and Feuerdent, under *Commode*	194	2
Extending Empire, etc.: S. H. A. IV, Chap. 27; cf. Mommsen, *"Provinces of the Roman Empire"* (English), Vol. I, p. 235; also, Herodian, Book I, Chap. 5, 7	194	8

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Vindobona: So, S. Aurelius Victor; Tertullian says, at Sirmium	194	15
Dying speech: Herodian, Book I, Chap. 4. The speeches in these ancient historians, though no doubt founded on some evidence, give the writer's notions of what such speeches should be. See comment, p. 181, l. 26.	194	17
Doch getrost! du bist zu Haus: "Be comforted, thou art at home."	196	33
Ridens res humanas, etc.: S. H. A. IV, Chap. 28, 4; Dio Cass. LXXII, 34; S. H. A. IV, Chap. 28, 8 . . .	197	9

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Julius Capitolinus: S. H. A. IV, Chap. 18, 2. "He surpassed all princes *sanctitate vitae,* in purity of life." Also, Chap. 18, 1-2, 3-5, 6-7	199	15
Fronto, quoted: Haines, p. 46	199	35
Iliad IX, 341-2	203	5
"My fellow soldier": Herodian, Book I, Chap. 5, 3 . .	204	12
Commodus's education: Herodian, Book I, Chap. 2 . .	204	14
Commodus naturally good: Dio Cass. LXXIII, 1 . .	204	18
Tribunician power: S. H. A. IV, Chap. 27, 5	204	25
"Commodo imperium," etc.: S. H. A. VI, Chap. 13, 3-4; cf. Lucius Verus had asked that he be made Caesar, long before, S. H. A. IV, Chap. 12, 8	204	28
Followed father's plans: Herodian, Book I, Chap. 6, §1 .	205	5
"Fawning Parasites," etc.: Herodian, Book I, Chap. 6, §1, Maxwell's translation, 1629	205	10
Commodus welcomed, etc.: Herodian, Book I, Chap. 7, §3	205	18

Chapter XVII

Law allowed to take its course: cf. Digest XLVIII, tit. 19, Chap. 30; Paulus, *Sent.,* V, 21, 2. "Marcus sent to the island of criminal detention those who, under pretext of a new religion, or of prophecies, excited the multitude and corrupted morals." This does not appear to have any special application to Christians.	209	15
The martyr Sanctus: Eusebius, *Ecc. Hist.,* Book V, Chap. 1	210	7

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Date of Octavius: cf. *Class Review* 1914, p. 64; Pfleiderer, IV, Chap. 28	211	15
Athenagoras: *Apology*, III	213	22
Epistle from church at Lyons: Eusebius, *supra*	213	25
Tertullian, etc.: cf. *Ad Nationes*, I, Chap. XV, XVI	214	4
Universal belief: cf. Lucian, *Alexander the False Prophet*, Chap. 25, 38	214	16
Proconsuls: Ramsay, 175	214	24
Tacitus: *Annals*, XV, 44	215	15
Suetonius: *Nero*, XVI	215	19
Pliny: *Letters*, Vol. X, 96	215	20
Minucius Felix: *Supra*	215	30
State *vs.* Speratus: *Étude sur un nouveau texte*, Aubé	215	35
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Dislike of Jews: cf. Persaeus, V, 179-184; Juvenal, see any index to the Satires; *"Sceleratissima gens,"* Seneca, *Fragmenta*, 42 Haase; Dio Cass. LXXVIII, 32, tells of the frightful cruelty of the Jews during a revolt.	216	20
Spreading evil reports: Justin, *Dial. with Trypho*, 17	217	6

Chapter XVIII

Human sacrifices: cf. Canfield, p. 21, Note 1	220	22
Apotheosis: See Mrs. S. A. Strong, *Apotheosis;* cf. Cicero's *Republic*, Lib. VI, Chap. 8, where, in Scipio's dream, it is said, "harum [civitatum] rectores et conservatores hinc profecti huc revertuntur," "The rulers and preservers of states come down from [heaven] and return thither."	225	13
Cult of Rome and Augustus: cf. Hardy, pp. 93, etc.	226	5
Mommsen: *Gesammelte Schriften*, VI, p. 541	226	22
"O Marcomanni," etc.: Amm. Marcell. XXII, 5, §5	227	33
Trajan to Pliny: Pliny's *Letters* X, 34; cf. Hardy, p. 168, etc.	229	6
Name of Christian: See Hardy, *Christianity and the Roman Government*, Section VII, p. 125; Ramsay, pp. 245, 259, 281, 333. But cf. Saleilles, *Mélanges P. F. Giraud*, p. 502, who seems to dissent; also cf. Augar, *Die Frau*, etc., p. 66	230	11
Hadrian's rescript: Eusebius, Book IV, Chap. 9; Lightfoot, Part II, Vol. I, p. 464	233	6

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Antoninus's instructions: Eusebius, Book IV, Chap. 26; cf. do. IV, 13, and Haines, M. A. 386-9. This rescript is very doubtful. 233 12

Polycarp's case: Eusebius, Book IV, Chap. 15. See also, Lightfoot, Part II, Vol. I, p. 465; Ramsay, p. 331 . 233 16

Publius the martyr: Eusebius, Book IV, Chap. 23; Lightfoot, Part II, Vol. I, pp. 492, 524 . . . . . 233 21

Martyrs in Rome: Justin's *Apol.* II, 2; Lightfoot, Part II, Vol. I, p. 492 . . . . . 233 23

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Punishment not always enforced: cf. Lucian, *Peregrinus Proteus* where the governor of Syria lets Peregrine, at that time a Christian, and "chief of the sect," go free 236 6

"Blando colloquio": *State* vs. *Felicitas, infra* 236 11

State *vs.* Justin et al: *Acta Justini,* Otto, Justin Martyr; see Lightfoot, Part II, Vol. I, 493-4 . . 236 16

Rusticus compelled to leave books: Themistius, XXXIV (8), 9 . . . . . 236 25

Character of Rusticus: M. A. I, 7 . . . . . 236 26

Fronto's remark: Naber, *Ad Ant. Imp.* I, 2, *supra* . . 236 33

His influence: S. H. A. IV, 3, 3 . . . . . 237 1

An upright judge: As to the conscientiousness of Roman judges compare the scruples of Aulus Gellius, A. G. XIV, 2 . . . . . 237 6

State *vs.* Justin, et al: *Justin Martyr,* Appendix, p. 266; Otto (*Corpus Apologetarum Christianorum Saeculi Secundi*) 237 8

State *vs.* Carpos: Aubé, *L'Église et l'État,* Appendix I. Aubé thinks this trial was about 250 A. D. in the reign of Decius. 240 14

State *vs.* Namphamo: Lightfoot, Part II, Vol. I, p. 506 . 240 23

State *vs.* Speratus: Aubé, *Étude sur un nouveau texte des Actes des Martyrs Scillitains;* cf. Lightfoot, Part II, Vol. I, p. 508 . . . . . 240 27

Martyrdom of Thraseas: Eusebius, Book V, Chap. 24 . 240 34

Martyrdom of Sagaris: Eusebius, Book V, Chap. 24 . 240 34

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Martyrdom of Papirius: Eusebius, Book V, Chap. 24; Lightfoot, *supra,* p. 494. Lightfoot says it is doubtful whether Papirius and Melito were martyred. . 240 35

Martyrdom of Felicitas: Lightfoot, *supra,* p. 495 . . 241 1

Martyrdom of Caecilia: Lightfoot, *supra,* p. 500 . . . 241 3

Tragedy of Church at Lyons: Eusebius, Book V, Chaps. 1, 2, 3, 4 . . . . . 241 11

Request for instructions: Marcus believed he knew them by reputation, they were atheists, they would not serve their country in its need, and did their deeds behind closed doors (M. A. III, 16). 242 8

Stoics and Christians: For the Stoic phrases, which are taken from Seneca, see Fleury, *St. Paul et Sénèque,* Vol. I, pp. 23-84; also Charles Burnier, *Morale de Sénèque et le Néo-Stoicisme* 243 20

Tennyson quoted: *In Memoriam* 243 29

Deo parere libertas est: "To obey God is freedom." . . 244 11

Animus nisi purus, etc.: "Unless a soul is pure and holy it cannot perceive God." 244 12

Qui dedit beneficium taceat: "Let him who has done a kind act not speak of it." 244 14

Vivere militare est: "To live is to be a soldier." . . . 244 17

Receda in te quantum potes: "Retire unto thyself as much as thou canst." 244 18

Nec domum esse, etc.: translated in text 244 19

F. W. H. Myers: *Human Personality,* etc., Vol. II, §1007 . . . . . 250 21

"Manifest themselves to his heart": cf. Cicero, *De Natura Deorum,* Lib. II, §61. Men observe the rising and setting of the stars, they observe the seasons, eclipses of the sun and moon, and from this contemplation the soul acquires a knowledge of the gods; thence religion (*pietas*) follows, and linked with religion justice and the other virtues, and from these comes salvation (*vita beata*). Cf. Zaleucus, preface to the laws: All the inhabitants of the state, whether in the city or in the country, ought above all to believe in the existence of the gods, especially when they look up (καὶ ἀναβλέποντας) at the heavens and the cosmos, and at the righteousness and order in them, for they are not the handiwork of chance or of men. Stobaeus, *Florilegium*

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II, 163 (Ed. Meineke, 1855). Bentley says that the attribution to Zaleucus is incorrect (but the author's identity is irrelevant), *Phalaris*, p. 284	252	2
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Maximus of Tyre: *On the daemon of Socrates* (French translation), II, XVII	253	6
Apuleius: *A discourse concerning Socrates's daemon.* Cf. Myers, *Human Personality*, II, §§812-814; also, *Golden Sayings of Epictetus*, XXXVII, p. 30 . .	253	10
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Φαντασία: See Dio. Laer. VII, *Zeno*, 36, 37, etc. Zeno, Cleanthes and Chrysippus in H. von Arnim; Arnold on Roman Stoicism; Zeller on Stoics; cf. Christian acceptance of the theory, "Er sol die worheit blos bekennen und schowen alse sú an ir selbèr is, He must recognize and look on the truth as it is in itself." *Nicolaus von Basel*, p. 6, C. Schmidt . . .	259	17
Stoics haughty: cf. Pascal, "Ces principes d'une superbe diabolique, These principles of a diabolical pride."	262	15
Physics: See, Dio. Laer. VII, *Zeno*, 67, 68, 70, 72, 74, 76, etc.; Arnim, Arnold and Zeller, *supra* . . .	263	8
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